

Mme. B. Boissonnas

# UN VAINCU

VANQUISHED YET GREAT

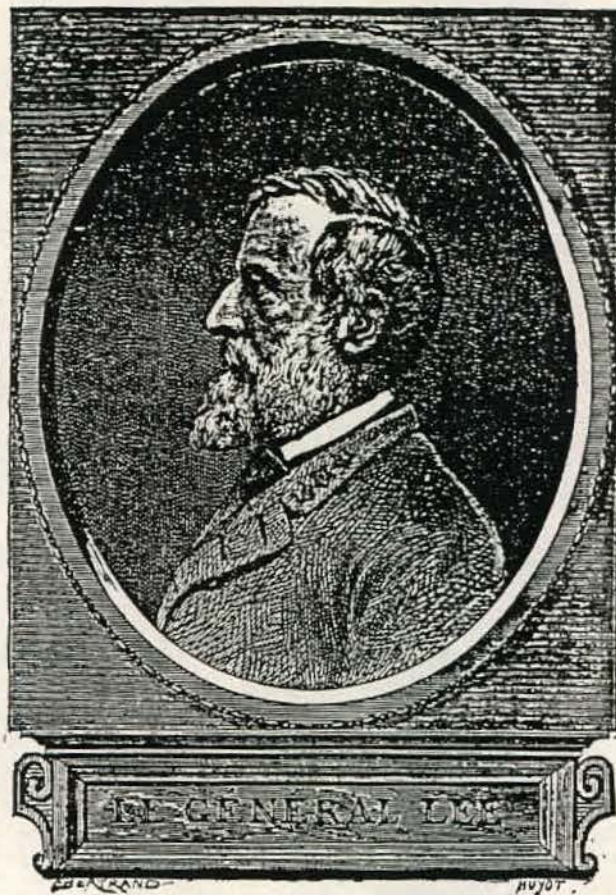
General Robert E. Lee

*He had kept*

*The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.*

*(Byron: Childe Harold)*

UN VAINCU



COLLECTION HETZEL

## INTRODUCTION

Here is an English translation of a book written in French on the life of General Robert E. Lee and on the Civil War. An American could legitimately ask: "Why on earth translate from the French a book on Lee and the Civil War when they have already been treated, in English, in so many other interesting books?"

There are several answers to that question, the first being that the book was written in 1875 by my Grandmother, a Frenchwoman, shortly after the end of the Civil War, and of the 1870 war in which Germany had beaten France. She wrote it for her six children when she was 35 years old and dying of tuberculosis, in an effort to enhance the qualities of the current generation of young people -- those who would have to rebuild France.

Another answer is to benefit my numerous and fascinating American stepchildren and step-grandchildren. The members of our family on both sides of the Atlantic feel close to one another and I wanted to give them one more occasion to experience this closeness by concurring with one another in their admiration of the great man Robert E. Lee had been. He was an example of the virtues to be practiced in daily life, and whenever faced with grave and threatening problems, such as we and our descendants will have to tackle.

But there is another reason why this book needs to be translated in English. While working on the translation, and becoming more familiar with the causes, circumstances, and spirit of the Civil War, I was struck by the remarkable similarities: The misunderstandings between the North and South on the one hand, and the current misunderstandings between the USA and Europe on the other. I believe that it would be constructive for young Americans



and Europeans to read about and understand these similarities. It would help them gain the equanimity necessary to solve peacefully, and in the best interest of both sides, the disagreements between them.

The Civil War erupted, as all wars basically do, for economic reasons. General Lee was convinced that it could have been avoided if the proper spirit had inspired both North and South. Today, economic rivalry is inspiring misunderstandings and hostile feelings between the USA and Europe. With the fast economic development of China and Japan, which will increase competition, an economic war between the USA and Europe, both worlds of Judeo-Christian culture, will become really a Civil War. Thanks to the atom bomb it will probably not develop into a military one. It could, nevertheless, develop new forms, and cause uncountable miseries and local bloody fights.

Let us, therefore, endeavor to adopt Robert E. Lee's philosophy. The translation of this book is a minute effort in that direction.

Remi Boissonnas



## TO MY SONS (1)

As you well know, I love that which inspires worthy dreams. I love decent folks. I believe there is always something to gain in the company of noble souls.

Therefore -- and you have probably guessed it -- the defeated man I want to present to you was a noble-hearted one. One of those human beings whose pure and beneficent example must be saved from oblivion. And yet, during the war that tore America to pieces, this defeated man, while defending his native land, fought, as you will see, for the South -- the land of slavery.

You will discover with what deep conviction of obeying to his sense of duty, with what heart-rending suffering he made the ominous choice that decided his life.

For him, no more than for any other American, the war, in its beginning, did not have as its principle objective the suppression of slavery. No, he certainly was not pro-slavery -- he who, long before, had already liberated all the slaves of his estate; but, grandson by marriage of George Washington, raised with the faith in the principles on which the union of the states had been built, he was convinced that on a land as vast as America, it was necessary to maintain the traditional independence of the states.

This independence was a protection against the eventual encroachments of the central power. Defending it was, in his eyes, defending state's rights, law, liberty, and so he took

up arms.

I was reading recently a sad, but true, sentence which lead my thoughts back to the painful crisis that General Lee had struggled through between two contradictory duties.

"The most difficult thing during a revolution is not to do one's duty, but to know where it lies." (1)

If my hero made a mistake, his loyalty has never been questioned. Even his adversaries paid tribute to it when they gave him a nickname, sweet to French ears: "Bayard Americain" (2)

Such as he was, I want to acquaint you with him. I believe it is good to show you, in these days of universal intolerance, that men whose nobility is not easy to equal can march under a flag that would never be ours.

Wherever God has given rise to great characters, are they not our common assets? Are we so rich that we can afford to let our minds forget them? To let our minds forget invigorating examples?

Whatever the name we give to the cause served by General Lee, you will discover that, for him, it was the cause of his country; and you will consider him worthy of being known by all those of us who hope intensely for the resurrection of the

---

(1) Saint Rene Taillandier

(2) Bayard le chevalier sans peur et sans reproche. The fearless, spotless, knight.



two great feelings which restore honor to dispirited nations, love of duty, love of homeland.

If you conclude, from the narrative you are going to read, that those two feelings reach their full power and beauty only in the souls of believers who rest their terrestrial virtues on their heavenly hopes, you will have arrived at the same conclusion as I have.

And if, when you measure the accomplishments of devoted men, your hopes for our country become more optimistic, if you return to your tasks stronger and more devoted, our time, dear children, will not have been wasted.

Convince yourselves that they must bear fruit, our bitter memories. Everything has changed around us. Could we remain such as we were in the past? We haven't taken enough heed -- and this is not new -- of our duties towards our home land. France was nothing more to us than a country full of charm, where life was pleasant. We thought we had done all our duty towards her when we paid our taxes, which paid the army.

Now we have received the lessons of suffering. We are at the hour of vital resolution, of patient labor. From now on, every child in France must have in front of his eyes, in his mind, deep in his heart, a realization that he no longer belongs to himself, but to a precise, sacred duty. That duty has nothing to do with hatred nor vengeance. That duty is to love our country with a devoted, active love. A love by which one lives, for which one dies.



Comfort France! Bring back to her that sweet glory that mothers wish to receive from their children. Bring back to her the crown -- all the crowns -- she wore in the past among the nations. Rebuild her peaceful, learned, powerful -- rich even, you might wish -- and pray God to restore in her the feelings of faith and justice.

Nothing of what you will do to increase your value, to extend your knowledge, to accomplish more, will be wasted. A day will come when France will harvest the fruit of all your efforts. The child who takes pain over his science lessons -- the one who molds his tongue to the harsh inflections of a foreign language -- the young man who submits himself to patient research, higher studies -- all of them should be assured that they toil for their country.

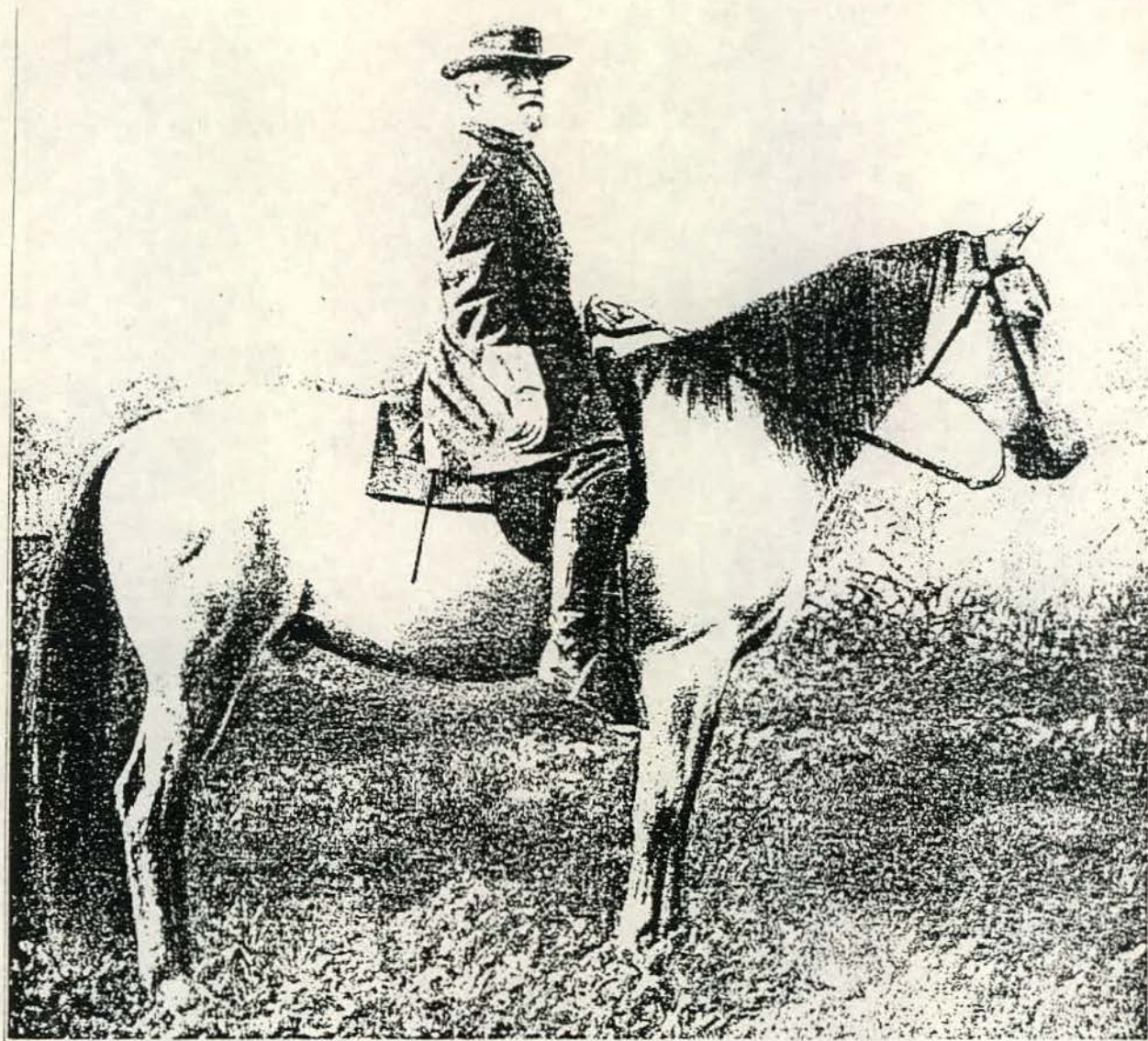
The day the defeated hero I want to present to you felt, after four years of fighting, that his broken sword was falling from his hands, he did not weaken. Virginia still existed. He should still work for her. Defeat taught him neither hatred nor anger. It instilled into his heart only a greater ardor -- a purer, deeper devotion; and Robert Lee, heir of Washington, glorious Commander in Chief of the Confederate Armies, wanting to put his remaining strength into the service of his country, chose to become president of a college.

"I have seen," said he, "a great number of Southern young

men die under my flag. I want to consecrate my life making  
the survivors men with a sense of duty.

Lucie Boissonnas





"I CAN ONLY SAY HE IS A CONFEDERATE GRAY"—LEE ON "TRAVELLER"

This famous photograph of Lee on "Traveller" was taken by Miley, of Lexington, in September, 1866. In July of that year Brady, Gardner, and Miley had tried to get a photograph of the general on his horse, but the weather was so hot and the flies accordingly so annoying that the pictures were very poor. But the September picture has become probably the most popular photograph in the South. In the Army of Northern Virginia the horse was almost as well known as his master. It was foaled near the White Sulphur Springs in West Virginia, and attracted the notice of General Lee in 1861. Lee's affection for it was very deep and strong. On it he rode from Richmond to Lexington to assume his duties as president of Washington College. During the remainder of his life "Traveller" was his constant companion. His son records that the general enjoyed nothing more than a long ride, which gave him renewed energy for his work. In one of his letters while away from home he said: "How is Traveller? Tell him I miss him dreadfully, and have repented of our separation but once—and that is the whole time since we parted."



## VANQUISHED YET GREAT

### CHAPTER ONE - THE FAMILY, THE MILITARY SCHOOL

In the northeast part of authentic Virginia, where the Chesapeake Bay cuts deeply into the American land, the county of Westmoreland lies like a sort of peninsula between two powerful rivers -- the Potomac(1) and the Rappahannock -- whose slightly barbarous names we will encounter frequently. Their reaches are known for their fertility in this America that seems fertility itself. Initially covered with impenetrable forests, they now produce tobacco and cereals in profusion. But the islands scattered along the river's course still carry centennial maple trees. The hills have preserved the deep shadows of bygone days. No other land succeeds in being, at the same time, richer and more picturesque.

It is in an old mansion settled between the two rivers, on the edge of the woods conquered long ago by the English settlers over the Indian tribes, that, on January 19th, 1807, Robert Edward Lee was born. His family was of English descent. Two hundred years before, one of his ancestors, sent by King Charles II to govern the Province of Virginia, had become attached to the new world and had made it his definite home.

His sons and grandsons had all been public-minded. They

---

(1) Potomac: River of the Swans.

were among the leaders of Virginia's aristocracy; and when, severing the bonds that tied her to ancient Europe -- when America proclaimed herself free -- two of the Lees were among the signatories of the Declaration of Independence, while another member of the family, Arthur Lee, was Ambassador to France, and developed for the young nation a faithful ally.

During the eight years of fighting against the English power, the Lee family was always on the front line. The family spared neither its possessions nor its blood, and gave Washington one of his most useful assistants, Henry Lee.(1)

Outstanding officer of cavalry, Henry Lee assisted his chief constantly in the long and unrelenting fight he pursued without weakening. He remained his intimate friend after the fight ceased. Unfortunately, he died too soon, when his son, Robert -- with whose life we want to acquaint you -- was only 10-years-old.

One might have feared that the lack of paternal authority would be fatal for the education of the child, but Henry Lee had already managed to imprint in his son's young soul respect for truth and absolute loyalty to duty that were to remain the outstanding features of his character.

One never knows how much good a noble example can do. The memory of Washington, the remembrance of a father worthy of the friendship of such a man, watched over the child. He

---

(1) Henry Lee nicknamed "Lighthorse Harry".



remained truthful, courageous, and kind. In his childhood, he was noticeable for his tenderness towards his mother, and by his passion for physical exercise. This mother, who was a widow, and sick, and missing her two eldest sons who were following their studies far from home, was adopted by Robert -- if one dare use such a word in such a circumstance. Looking after his mother, helping her in all respects, even those daily home chores that boys usually hate, became the sacred concerns of his youth; and the valiant hands which would, in ten battles grasp the sword of leadership, devoted themselves to handling the keys of a large household.

At the age of 15, he was strong enough to carry Mrs. Lee in his arms, and from there on, he never failed to render her this service. Nothing could distract him from it.(1)

When the baying of hounds, hunting deer or fox, would ring in the hills along the Potomac, the passionate instinct of the hunter would intoxicate that young head and would send tingles in those long, tireless legs; and yet Robert Lee remained faithful to the task he had assigned to himself. Every single day, his mother took her walk with him. Now and then, she would protest against what she called his sacrifices, but the young man never accepted to leave her to

---

(1) When she writes this book, Lucie Boissonnas is 35. She has TB already, from which she would die at the age of 37. She has 4 sons and 2 daughters.



pursue his pleasures. So much so, that when time had come for him to enter West Point, the American Saint-Cyr, his mother exclaimed with distress, "How can I live without Robert? He is both son and daughter to me."

In memory of the services General Henry Lee rendered to his country, the State of Virginia took in charge the young man's tuition costs at West Point. From the very beginning, he gained the first rank in his class and kept up this rank during the 4 statutory years. The permanence of his success was due more to the stubbornness of his work, the perseverance of his efforts, than to his intellectual gifts, however remarkable they were.

One of his professors of mathematics(1) said that his main characteristic was to complete and to perfect everything he undertook. "...One of the branches of mathematics he studied with me was Conic Sections, in which some of the diagrams are very complicated. He drew the diagrams on a slate; and although he well knew that the one he was drawing would have to be removed to make room for another, he drew each one with as much accuracy and finish, lettering and all, as if it were to be engraved and printed...."

Such a sense of duty in his work attracted the esteem of his professors. A completely different set of qualities gained him popularity among his comrades, the evidence of

---

(1) Benjamin Hallowell of Alexandria.

which he discovered in different circumstances of his life.

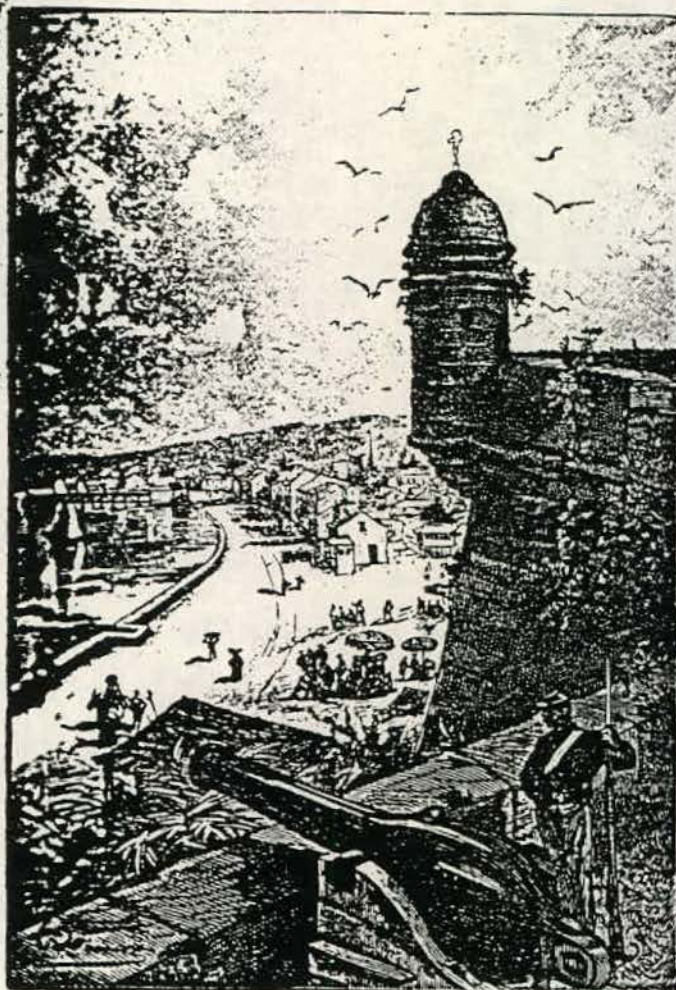
It is common knowledge that sport in England is greatly appreciated, and that physical training is dutifully practiced. The English have imported their predilections in America, where they have taken root, particularly in Virginia, which was colonized at first by noblemen still used to wearing the plated armor and heavy arms of their times.

It is much more important in America than in France to be a good walker, a good swimmer, a good rider. His great height, his muscular strength, and the quality of his horsemanship made of Robert Lee the champion of his comrades. They admired him more for his fast 12-hour walks than for the perfection of his geometrical figures. Were they completely wrong? You will discover that Robert Lee served his country with his strong limbs as well as with his science and with his heart.

Be that as it may, masters and students shared a common feeling -- that of esteem. Esteem for his rectitude and for his character. It was known that this great walker never drank wine or liquor, which was rare in those days; this dauntless rider never swore; this strong fighter was gentle, kindly, always ready to help. To masters and students, the slightest assertion of Robert Lee was considered an oath.

In a military institution, where it is absolutely necessary to train young men to the rigorous discipline they will be submitted to later on, it is customary to punish the





SAINT-AUGUSTIN. (P. 9.)



slightest encroachment on rules. And yet, it was discovered, when young Lee left the school in 1829, that a bad mark -- even for a mishap -- had never been associated with his name. This was a good omen for the future.

He was stationed at Cockspur Island, near Savannah. He was 22, and as sub-lieutenant in the Engineers, he was entering his active life. West Point is on the Hudson River, in the State of New York. The direct road from there to Savannah, in the State of Georgia, passed by his home. You can imagine the joy mother and son experienced at seeing one another after 4 years of separation. Unfortunately, that joy was to be disrupted.

Mistress Lee had at her service an old coachman whom Robert, as a small boy, had loved as one loves those who bring the great joys of one's childhood. It was Natty who had given him the reins to hold the first time. Natty had trained his first pony. Natty had been mingled with all his childhood, and Robert was looking forward to the joy the old servant would feel at seeing his charge wearing a uniform. Alas, poor Natty was seriously ill when his young man arrived; he was coughing and suffering cruelly.

"What can we do for Natty," Robert asked the doctors. They considered the patient fatally ill. Only a softer climate would, perhaps, bring him some comfort. The decision was promptly taken. The young lieutenant succeeded in bringing his mother to accept the sacrifice of their reunion,

and without delaying, he left, taking poor Natty to Georgia, near St. Augustine in Florida, named the Cannes of America.

There, he personally looked after him with all the care the most ingenious solicitude could invent. The illness was the stronger, but when old Natty expired, it was in the arms of his young master.

We will pass briefly over the first years of Robert Lee's career. Later on, as it comes into light, we will follow it step by step.

First in Savannah, next in Fort Hamilton, Robert Lee was in charge of following -- or directing -- military engineering. Everywhere, he had the satisfaction of succeeding. As in West Point, his method was to neglect nothing, so as to perfect his job. For him, work was something different from a necessity of existence or a means to arise professionally. It was a manly task that needed to be scrupulously accomplished. He gave the proof that he understood thus his career, when in 1831 was presented to him a most natural occasion of leaving his military status. He married Miss Mary Custis, granddaughter of Washington's widow, and heiress to most of the fortune of the great man. Young Mistress Lee(1) brought her husband the beautiful land of Arlington on the banks of the Potomac; and that of the White

---

(1) She died in 1872.



House(1), both famous for having been the residence of America's hero.

The books, the furniture -- what the Americans call the relics of Washington -- were part of the precious components of the heirloom and made of these two properties, places of pilgrimage for travelers of all nations.

It seems that it would have been pleasant for the young officer to spend his life in those beautiful estates, with a beloved wife, and to enjoy peacefully everything an immense fortune could give him. If the temptation arose -- and it must have -- it was defeated by the realization that work -- real work -- alone brings dignity to a life and is one of the duties no one has the right to evade.

---

(1) On the Pamunkey River.

## CHAPTER TWO - THE CHILDREN

We pick up again a few years later with Robert Lee as a Captain, engineering in St. Louis, State of Missouri, the operations that were to regulate the course of the Mississippi.

This beautiful river, 6,000 kilometers long(1) crosses the whole territory of the Union and serves as principal commercial route between 10 states.(2) It is stupendously wide, sprinkled with islands, cut with rapids, irregular in its flow. It presents great difficulties to navigation.

Upstream from St. Louis, which was in old days, one of France's most important settlements, the Mississippi threatened to leave its bed and furrow another one. It would then have gone so far from the city that the latter would have lost all its commercial importance. Long and skillful works constrained the river to remain between its ancient banks, saved the city from ruin, and acquired for Captain Lee the reputation of a first-class engineer.

But, if work took so large a share of the young man's life, it did not absorb it entirely. Arlington received as frequent visits as the long distances permitted, and during the separations, the most tender concern never ceased to keep a watchful eye on a distant family.

---

(1) Including the Missouri.

(2) Written in 1875.



The Captain, returning to his post in St. Louis, writes: "You do not know how much I have missed you and the children, my dear Mary.... If I could only get a squeeze at that little fellow turning up his sweet mouth to 'keese Baba!' You must not let him run wild in my absence, and will have to exercise firm authority over all of them. This will not require severity, or even strictness, but constant attention, and an unwavering course. Mildness and forbearance, tempered by firmness and judgment, will strengthen their affection for you, while it will maintain your control over them"

The Captain was all the more entitled to give advice because he had, to the highest level, a natural gift for education. To an almost feminine tenderness, he added the firmness that springs from a strong feeling of justice. Deeply imbued by everything noble, Robert Lee had in him what was necessary to communicate his passion.

It is said that to convince, one must be convinced. Cold moral lessons never improve anybody; but one does not resist long to the contagion of good practiced with conviction and simplicity.

The visits to Arlington were precious moments. If the father kept in his heart the tender picture of his "little fellow," the "little fellow," and later on, his brothers and sisters, had a deep admiration for the great officer who, once at home, seemed to belong to them entirely. The Captain,

however, was sometimes obliged to go to Washington. (1) He would only come back in the evening and his first care was to question the children on their use of the day. Often, alas, there was some mischief to report, but, in America as in Europe, it seems that the witnesses of misdeeds are more easily scandalized than their perpetrators. When the question, "What have you done today," provoked an accounting of some mischief accomplished by a brother or a sister, "I don't want to know what your brother has done," the Captain would interrupt. I want to know what you have done," and the tell-tale, ashamed, would become silent. Each child having given his account of the day, the father would begin making his own. He considered that his evening belonged to his children, and even when urgent work would oblige him to spend his night finishing it, he didn't dream of shortening their pleasure.

War epics or travel experiences, fine deeds, described with enthusiasm, joyous tales answered by peels of laughter filled the happy evenings at Arlington. Sometimes, a youngster would confess he hadn't finished his school work. Books and notebooks would immediately appear on the family table, the Captain would help solve the difficulties, and, after making sure lessons were learned and tasks finished, the

---

(1) Arlington is separated from Washington by the width of the Potomac.



usual entertainment would be resumed.

Captain Lee took his responsibility as an educator very seriously. His eldest son, Custis, followed him one winter day for a long walk in the snow. His hand was nestled in his father's hand, but gradually his hand slipped out and the child walked behind. After a few moments, the Captain looked back and saw Custis, holding himself straight, head high, trying to imitate all his father's movements. The child was making great efforts to lay his small feet exactly in the long footprints of the Captain. "When I saw this," said the General, "I said to myself, 'It behooves me to walk very straight, when this fellow is already following in my tracks.'"

Three sons and four daughters were born in Arlington. They all received the same care and were enveloped in the same tenderness. Their father was their only professor for riding and swimming. He remained their most intimate friend, and day after day knew how to adjust his teaching and advice to their age.

We will end our quotations with a few lines from a letter written to his eldest son, becoming a young man.

After a few precepts such as: "Never do wrong to gain or keep a friend. Whoever would give himself for that price, would not be worth the sacrifice you would make for him...don't appear different than you are...." he adds, "As for the feeling of duty, let me give you an example: One day almost a hundred years ago, the sky became so dark that the

light of the sun seemed completely out. It is still called "la journee noire"(1). The congress of Connecticut was deliberating, and as gradually the unexpected and frightening darkness increased, the congressmen shared the general terror. Many of them thought and said that doomsday had arrived, and someone suggested to close the meeting.

"But an old Puritan(2) spoke up and said that if really the last day had arrived, he wanted to be found at his post doing his duty. for that he requested that lights be brought so that the assembly may continue its work. A great calm reigned in the soul of this man, the calm of divine wisdom, and he was possessed by the inflexible will to do his duty. The word duty is the most sublime of our language. Do it in all circumstances like the old Puritan. You can't do much more, never allow yourself to do less. See to it that not a single of our hairs turns white through your fault.(3)

None of Captain Lee's advice -- none of his words -- were

---

(1) Journee noire: The black day.

(2) Davenport de Stamford.

(3) I failed finding the original text of Lee's letter to his son. The text is therefore a translation into English of the French text which was a translation from English into French. How did my grandmother know of this text? Perhaps directly from one of Lee's daughters, with whom she had contacts.



lost for his children. His sons, though quite young, were going to accomplish what they thought was their duty on the battlefields; and his daughters were going to devote themselves in hospitals with the same simple courage.

### CHAPTER THREE - THE INDIANS IN THE WEST,

#### THE MEXICAN CAMPAIGN

It is common knowledge how the merciless progress of civilization pushed back the Indians -- first occupants of the country -- to the far-off extremities of America

The land which their laziness left uncultivated and which, for them, was but a space appropriate for hunting, revealed its richness to the settlers coming from Europe. Established at first on the Atlantic Coast, then along the rivers, the pioneers advanced into the heart of the country as their numbers increased. Wherever the white men penetrated, wherever their axe opened the primal forests, wide clearings were soon cultivated, and the weak, yet ferocious tribes of Redskins, divided and incapable of uniting, even for their own defense, were fatally condemned to disappear. How much blood has been shed in those obscure fights, no one knows. Both sides fought for their lives, and it seems that the Indian, slain in front of his ancestors' graves, and the European, scalped on the threshold of the house he was building for his children, deserve the same compassion.

The successive victories that the settlers owed principally to their superior armament secured possession of the land, and the savages were finally relegated to the lost wilderness of the far west. The remnants of their various tribes, joined together in a common misfortune, became a sort of miserable population, hostile to work, and reduced for



their living to seize by looting the product of other people's work.

Remarkable riders, the Indians would escape from their campsites in small groups, cover in a single night enormous distances, surprise isolated settlers, set fire to their farms, herd the cattle away, slaughter men, women, and children, and be back amidst their own people before the news of their attack had reached those who could have pursued them.

Wherever the proximity of the Mexican border allowed Indian gangs to take refuge, they escaped repression. Soon, a great number of Indians settled in the Mexican territory, and safe from punishment, intensified their destructions. It became completely impossible for the Europeans to live along the extended frontier of Mexico. Like a flight of vultures, the looting Comanches, Apache, Pawnees, et cetera, swooped down on the clearings in the forests, and, loaded with the spoils they had robbed from the settlers, returned to the shelter given by the flag that protected them. Many a time did the U. S. Government try to obtain from Mexico a more thorough control of its border, or reparation for the loss sustained. The promises made -- promises that were, perhaps, difficult to honor -- were always broken. So much so, that in 1847, the U. S. declared war on Mexico.

There is always something painful in seeing a powerful nation attack a weak one, and Captain Lee was among those who would have preferred the Union government to display a still

greater patience. War being declared, he could only be -- and was -- a soldier.

It was the first time since the Washington days that an American army was embarking on a campaign. The nation kept a close watch over its preparation, with an interest easy to conceive. It was hoped that the result of the expedition would be worthy of a great people. But the nation, more trade than military-minded, was prone to entertain a small army and, at first, did not accept the necessary sacrifices that it later imposed on itself with such generous eagerness.

Eight thousand men were concentrated under the command of General Scott. Captain Lee was in command of the engineering. Mustered first at Brazos, on the southern coast of Texas, this little army crossed the Gulf of Mexico and landed near Vera Cruz. The preliminary works under the responsibility of our Captain were speedily accomplished, and the town soon surrendered itself.

Then began the real difficulties. The army was marching towards Mexico City, and the invaded nation mustered all its means to make the assailants pay dearly for their presumption in choosing the most direct route to the capital.

Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Cherubesco, became the bloody stages of a march beset with difficulties. Not trusting the natural obstacles of the land, the Mexicans had fortified all the mountain passes. They had to be conquered -- one after the other -- by sheer fighting. Under the enemy's fire,



Captain Lee had to lay out, then build, the roads capable of bearing his powerful artillery. Already there, he revealed his sharp military judgement that was to place him among the greatest military men of our time.

After the battle of Cerro Gordo, the army entered the mountainous region where the Mexican General Valentia had taken refuge. His positions were not known, and it was important to get information about them. Captain Lee, with a few of his officers and a group of his best soldiers, went off to get the lay of the land. They climbed the hills, reached a desolate plateau which they crossed with innumerable obstacles and difficulties, until they were confronted with a wall of blocks of lava. The party managed to climb those rocks and discovered with stupefaction that as far as their view could reach, those rocks crisscrossed over a land destitute of any vegetation. They could not discover the slightest sign of a trail. On the whole surface of the plateau, there was nothing but sharp needle points or cutting ridges, and it was impossible, even with field glasses, to discover the end of this jumble.

They realized they were in a volcanic desert, called Pedrigale, mentioned on a few maps. Captain Lee and a handful of resolute men couldn't reconcile themselves to return to their camp without having pushed their exploration further.

Sliding down a block of lava, climbing on one another's backs to ascend another, they advanced at the cost of

considerable fatigue. A few meters from their starting point, there were only five explorers left -- their companions having decided to reverse their steps. Those five did not let themselves be demoralized by a most excusable defection, and continued their strange expedition.

Coming to the part of the desert where distances between the blocks were shorter, they began jumping from one to another, but this presented its own type of danger, the top of a rock being barely wide enough to allow two feet to rest on it at the same time, and a fall on those sharp ridges being dangerous and painful.

After several hours of this kind of gymnastics -- for one cannot call the crossing of the Pedrigale a march -- Captain Lee and his companions reached its extremity. It was not too soon. They were exhausted, and a storm -- one of those Mexican storms which overthrow nature completely -- burst over their heads. Looking for a shelter under a rock, one of the party saw, at a very small distance, a Mexican sentinel carelessly guarding what seemed to be a powder magazine. Still other clues lead Captain Lee to surmise that more troops must be nearby and feel in total security. They could reasonably consider that the Pedrigale was, by itself, a strong enough defense against any attack. He proposed to his companions to return across the Pedrigale and inform General Scott of their discovery.

The four officers considered they were too exhausted to



repeat such an exploit. The storm was in its full strength, night was falling, the dangers they had escaped with such difficulty would be ten-fold in the obscurity, the rain, and the wind. To start at this time was courting death, or at least losing oneself and remaining until daytime in this maze of rocks, incapable therefore of being of any use to General Scott.

Captain Lee informed them of his resolution to carry the news immediately. He would go alone, and would try the next day to bring the army by a less perilous road. His companions exclaimed that he was inviting death if he crossed that desert by night with such a storm, and beseeched him to wait for daytime, as he would certainly, in spite of all his strength and skill, lose himself. But Captain Lee felt how important it was for the General to be informed, as soon as possible, of the presence of the Mexican Corps, and compelling his exhausted limbs to serve his energetic will, he headed into the rocky plateau.

One can imagine what such an expedition turned out to be. Guided in the obscurity only by the direction of the wind, if the storm had ceased, the Captain would have remained lost in the middle of that chaos. Fortunately, the wind held on with the same violence, and Robert Lee reached Scott's encampments soon enough to enable adapting the plans to the information he was bringing. The same day, the U. S. Army attacked, by surprise, Valentia's army, won the victory of

Contreras, and thus opened the road to Mexico.

Many years after, whenever General Scott was asked which had been, in his opinion, the most beautiful deed accomplished during the war, he always answered, "Lee's crossing the Pedrigale".

A few days after the battle of Contreras, the Battle of Chapultepec took place at the very gates of Mexico. There, a dying bullet hit Robert Lee right in his chest. The shock was so strong that he lost consciousness and remained, a long time, lying on the ground without giving any sign of life. His superb white mare, Creole, whose beauty and deeds had been made famous in all the army, remained faithfully next to his master's body. Jim, the Captain's ordinance, seeing from a distance Creole immobile and without a rider, fearing an accident, rushed up. His efforts to bring back to life his wounded master seeming fruitless, the poor man thought he was dying.

Meanwhile, the City of Mexico made its submission, and the army was making haste to take possession of it. The companies, one after the other, were marching past the place where Captain Lee had fallen, and each soldier, seeing the beautiful and so well known white horse standing near the body while Jim was crying beside it, learned what loss the army had just suffered and expressed their concern. "Poor Lee," said some, "he certainly didn't spare himself much." Others would exclaim, "To die with the last shot, just when peace is



reached, what bad luck." And the troops marched on.

Meanwhile, the victim had regained consciousness, but not the strength to make the slightest movement. He could hear vaguely those reflections, and remained apparently paralyzed. General Scott and his staff were last to march by. "Ah, my dear comrade -- my brave Lee," he exclaimed, "what a tragic event. Gentlemen, you behold there, lost for our fatherland, the greatest military genius of America." And the General, hat in hand, bowed with deep emotion. At that very moment, the Captain was regaining consciousness and was able to reassure his Chief. A few days after, he was resuming his service.

The U. S. Army was obliged to occupy Mexico until the peace treaty was ratified. The hostility of the inhabitants made the sojourn in town very dangerous for the Americans, who were not numerous enough to maintain order in all the parts of the city at the same time. Several soldiers on guard were stabbed, and several officers, scouring the town, were hit or abducted, without any of the culprits being discovered.

One day, Captain Lee was going through a narrow street in a secluded section of the town. He was riding, as usual, Creole, and his orderly, Jim, was following him, when suddenly a shot was fired and a bullet grazed his hair. He stopped short, looked around quickly. A slight wisp of smoke showed him from which window the shot had been fired. Pulling out his watch, he handed it to Jim and ordered him to wait on the

spot, with the horses, for exactly 15 minutes. "If I haven't reappeared within that time," he added, "I will have been killed." Go then, and report to General Scott; and, throwing him his bridle, he disappeared into the dark entry of the house. The 15 minutes lapsed, and the Captain did not return. He had climbed the stairs to the floor corresponding to the smoke without meeting a soul; but arriving there, he found himself in a big room, in the midst of frightened women who were swearing in Mexican that they had seen nobody. That nobody, besides themselves, lived in the house. With great difficulty, the Captain untangled himself, and thrusting open a door, in front of which the women happened to huddle together, he entered a den of bandits, armed to the teeth. Alone, in the middle of a dozen men, with his usual intrepid calm, he obliged them all to show their guns. Two of them had just been fired. Without hesitation, and making use of the authority his tall height and his natural resolute bearing gave him, he took hold of the two owners and obliged them to follow him, without any of their comrades daring to defend them. The women were a more serious obstacle to clear. In spite of them, he managed to bring his prisoners downstairs and found in the street, poor Jim, who, still on horseback and his eyes on the watch, was conscious it marked five minutes more than the time allocated, but could not bring himself to lose all hope of seeing his master again.

The Mexicans were court-marshaled, but Robert Lee had not



wanted to be a supplier to the executioner, and he saw to it that they were liberated when the army left. He then returned to Arlington, having been promoted, at the end of the campaign, to the rank of Colonel.

## CHAPTER FOUR - IN TEXAS

The years that followed the Mexican War were as usefully spent as the previous ones. In charge of building Fort Calhoun(1), Colonel Lee was, in 1852, elected President of West Point, of which, as you remember, he had been an excellent pupil. The level of studies rose during the three years under his directorship, and one might have thought that progress in science had been the main concern of the new director when, in reality, his concern had extended to whatever could be good and useful for the cadets.

Convinced that bonds of trust and personal affection would be beneficial for them, he looked for means to bring the pupils closer to him. He had the impression that the young men were sometimes embarrassed at coming to see him during the hours of the day when their absence from common exercises could be noticed. He immediately changed entirely the program of his days so as to reserve the first hours in the morning for them. Even in winter he began his audiences at 6:00 a.m. and often gave up breakfast so as not to dismiss anybody. His solicitude brought excellent results, and many young men attribute to his firm and friendly talks, with their

---

(1) That Fort, meant to protect the entry of the Port of Baltimore, had to be built on piles, and is one of the most remarkable pieces of work existing in America. (This opinion was expressed in 1875.)



vitalizing influence on them, the decision they made and kept, to be men of duty.

At the same time, Colonel Lee was rebuilding the school's indoor arena, and undertook a major enterprise -- the beautiful road which, cut into pure rock, goes down from the promontory on which the school is built, to the banks of the Hudson.

Nominated in 1855 as Commander of a Cavalry Regiment, he left for Texas, a territory newly detached from Mexico, to protect it's frontier against the Indians. The results of the recent war had been practically nil. The Mexican government's promises remained unfulfilled, and it had become obvious that the Americans could only count on themselves to protect their nationals.

The United States government was, and is still obliged, to maintain all along the zone occupied by the Indians, a line of separate Forts rather like our blockhouses in Algeria, (1) each one of which is manned by a Detail of regular soldiers. The crude walls of these small Forts, made of tree trunks, serve as shelters for the families of settlers when they are threatened and eventually have to sustain real sieges. Sometimes those small garrisons are called to help isolated houses submitted to an attack. Often, they arrive too late and can only witness the murders or destructions already

---

(1) Written in 1875.

committed.

Among the Indian tribes having taken refuge along the frontier of Texas, the most famous and most powerful was the Comanches. Better than the Pawnees or the Apaches, with whom they had often associated in looting, the Comanches had managed to preserve their war customs as well as their traditions of respect for the Chiefs, of contempt for death, traditions which had, in the past, made the strength of their savage tribe.

The Comanches, at the time Colonel Lee was in charge of restraining them, could still muster ten thousand seasoned horsemen. For a single Regiment, divided into Platoons, extended over a long distance, such adversaries were not to be disdained. Colonel Lee was not one of those men who hurry to outlaw people or things they do not understand. Before using force, before committing those hideous massacres of which one has too many examples, he tried a pacific campaign among the Comanches and spared no effort to attract the Chiefs and establish with them an atmosphere of friendship capable, on specific occasions, of preventing bloody encounters, the memory of which only stirred up hate.

Scorning the greatest perils, for the Indian guile would not avoid committing a profitable murder, so long as it was possible, the Colonel visited, one after the other, the principal campsites of his Comanche neighbors. As a token of peace and trust, he never came but with a



light escort. Often even with only one servant, he joined, at considerable distances, caravans of Chiefs with whom he intended to smoke the peace pipe, according to tradition.

The astonishment caused by his daring was, without doubt, what saved him. Soon, among the Indians, he passed for a man protected by the great spirit. Marvelous stories were told from clearing to clearing about the new white chief, and his name acquired all the popularity attainable in a savage country.

The dealings which had taken place until that time between the American command and the Comanche changed completely. So much so, that no revolt took place while Colonel Lee remained in Texas. His military actions were limited to watching over the vagrant Indians who belonged to no tribe and looted indifferently friend or foe.

However, the system adopted by Colonel Lee turned out to present disadvantages for himself. His visits to the Indian Chiefs were scrupulously reciprocated, as he certainly wanted it to be. But, he had not taken into account the requirements of Comanche politeness. One of the articles of its code, not yet printed, requires that any person to whom a visit is made, must not leave his visitor, even for the shortest time. And the Comanche arrived at day-break and left only at sunset. Another rule is that the person visited offers his visitor a gift that the latter really likes. The visitor must never ask

for it, but to help his host in guessing what it would be, he keeps his eyes obstinately fixed on that object, with a patience really Indian, from morning to evening if necessary.

Not satisfied with coming themselves, one after the other, to pay the Colonel their interested court, the Comanche Chiefs did not need a long time to imagine using their wives for their new type of persecution. It became fashionable for the squaws to spend whole days in the tent of the white chief. Squatting gravely on their heels, these ladies remained completely silent, but their presence obliged the Colonel to remain in the room and to notice that each pair of soft and brilliant black eyes was looking fixedly at a different object which he had to end up by giving if he wanted to preserve the atmosphere of friendship he considered so important.

Instructed by experience, the Colonel finally got to subtract from visibility, everything except the four wooden partitions of his reception room. But, he did not gain as much as one might think. The attention of the Indian women concentrated on the Colonel himself, and finally, not a single piece of his clothing escaped being silently, but eloquently, demanded. His boots, particularly, provoked ardent covetousness. It was not rare to see two or three women fix their eyes on them. If the Colonel stood up, went right or left giving orders, those eyes would obstinately follow his feet, and the Colonel could not escape, in the end, taking off his shoes and offering them. Only then did he recover



possession of his domicile.

A few short expeditions interrupted the monotony of that existence.

"I have just returned from my expedition into the Comanche country; had a long trip of forty days..." he says in one of his letters. "The main column, which I accompanied, travelled eight hundred miles. We visited the head-waters of the Wichita and Brazos rivers...and swept down the valleys of the Conehn, the Colorado..." etc., etc. "We could find no Indians, and all the traces of them were old. The country had been fired in many places, and in some places it was still burning and abandoned...."

"The weather was intensely hot, and as we had no tents, we had the full benefit of the sun...."

"Camp Cooper, August 4th, 1856...The sun was fiery hot. The atmosphere like the blast from a hot-air furnace, the water salt...."

On August 25, he writes again, "I received to-day notice (through my spies) that a party of Comanches who have been on a marauding expedition to Mexico...are endeavoring to get around our camp on their way north, and are some fifteen miles below. They have separated into gangs of six, eight, and ten, to escape detection. I am in the act of sending out a company of cavalry to endeavor to catch them...I should go myself but for my forced journey to the Rio Grande...."

Such a military service must have held few attractive

moments, and it is easy to understand how much Arlington and its inhabitants must have been missed by him who was separated from them.

"Fort Brown, Texas, December, 1856.".....The time is approaching, dear M----, when I trust that many of you will be assembled around the family hearth of dear Arlington to celebrate another Christmas. Though absent, my heart will be in the midst of you. I shall enjoy in imagination and memory all that is going on. May nothing occur to mar or cloud the family fireside, and may each one be able to look with pride and pleasure to their deeds of the past year, and with confidence and hope to that in prospect. I can do nothing but love and pray for you all." ....

".....I am able to give you but little news, as nothing of interest transpires here, and I rarely see any one outside the garrison. My daily walks are alone, up and down the banks of the river, and my pleasure is derived from my own thoughts and from the sight of the flowers and animals I meet with there".....

"We get plenty of papers, but all of old dates. Things seem to be going on as usual in the States. Mr. Buchanan, it appears, is to be our next President. I hope he will be able to extinguish fanaticism North and South, cultivate love for the country and Union, and restore harmony between the different sections.".....

And some time after he resumes, "I hope you all had a



joyous Christmas at Arlington, and that it may be long and often repeated. I thought of you and wished to be with you. Mine was gratefully but silently passed. I endeavored to find some presents for the children in the garrison, and succeeded better than I anticipated. The stores were very barren, but by including them the week beforehand in my daily walks, I picked up something for all."

We have already said that the Forts were simple block houses, protecting only a small number of soldiers. Those block houses were also very far apart. It was not always easy to obtain, at the proper moment, the presence of the only Chaplain of the regiment, so officers were sometimes obliged to take his place in his ministry.

We are in the month of June. Colonel Lee is at Camp Cooper. "The thermometer ranges above 100 degrees; but the sickness among the men is on the decrease, though there has been another death among the children. He was as handsome a little boy as I ever saw -- the son of one of our sergeants, about a year old; I was admiring his appearance the day before he was taken ill. Last Thursday his little waxen form was committed to the earth. His father came to me, the tears flowing down his cheeks, and asked me to read the funeral service over his body, which I did at the grave for the second time in my life. I hope I shall not be called on again, for, though I believe it is far better for the child to be called by its Heavenly Creator into His presence in its purity and

innocence, unpolluted by sin and uncontaminated by the vices of the world, still it so wrings a parent's heart with anguish that it is painful to see."

One has noticed, through all the different periods of Colonel Lee's life, the strange charm he exerted on children. Hardly had they seen him than they pressed around him, listening to his slightest words, gave him their hearts, and did not forget him. The letter we have just read explains this exceptional attraction. The man who wrote it loved children. He loved them with predilection. That affection was felt by them and returned to him.



## CHAPTER FIVE - SOME OF THE CAUSES OF THE WAR

While Colonel Lee exercised, as we have seen, his distant command in Texas, the disagreements which had long existed between the northern and southern states had taken a new character of extreme gravity, and one was beginning to wonder what would happen if neither of the two parties had the patriotic wisdom of adopting a policy of concessions.

We must try to understand what were the causes of this antagonism which was soon to unleash a civil war on a nation, up till then, so privileged.

The vast country, gradually built of states united to one another, does no longer resemble what it was when a few weak colonies, repelling the yoke of England, formed the kernel of a colossal power. Originally, 13 states, close to one another, had had the same needs -- the same interests. They had been united by the feeling of their weakness and of the danger of this weakness. But, the rapid increase of their population, the emigration into new territories situated under widely separated latitudes, had simultaneously given birth to different, or contradictory interests, and liberated the minds from a beneficial fear by putting the new power above any threat.

Like all greatness, extension in size presents its own dangers. While, in the north, Maine shares the fogs of Newfoundland or the long winters of Quebec, Florida is close to the tropics and sags under its deadly heat.

As much as the customs of the lumberjacks in the north could differ from those of the planters in the south, so differed their interests. While the states, producers of cotton, needed free exportation; the states, producers of cloth, wanted measures that would retain the precious commodity, enabling them to transform it before its delivery to the consumption of the whole world. This was but one of the subjects of litigation. Many others, equally important, sprung up each day.

The habit of expressing similar votes on similar questions had assembled in one group in Congress the representation of the northern states; and in another group, the representation of the southern states. But, for a long time, the first of those parties had been increasing in strength and in self-confidence; whereas the second remained stationary. It was in the North, and not in the South, that immigration constantly brought new recruits.

In the North, the immigrant finds the climate and the productions of his own country. He can cultivate them himself. Why on earth would he go to the South, in those immense plantations of sugar cane that stretch as far as the eye can see, under a torrid sky, or among those rice fields, with their swampy lands, exhaling fevers deadly for the white?

The population was, therefore, increasing quickly in the North. The colonized states started to colonize, and the new territories, no sooner had they reached a population of 60,000



people, set themselves up as states that sent to Congress members who increased the strength of the northern party.

It was not so for the states in the South. Not only did their climate and the nature of their products fail to attract the Europeans, but an institution -- with reason, called a cursed institution(1) -- drove away the labor of free men.

Slavery, shameful source of an antique prosperity, fatal legacy that England [who has repented since] had made to her colonies, was accepted and lawful in the whole region where cotton was cultivated. To depict the state of abject misery of the black race would be a heart-rending task upon which we will not embark. Besides, everything has already been said about the most odious iniquity ever perpetrated.

What one knows less, is that by God's righteous justice, the oppressors were to receive their punishment from their crime itself. The ruin of the influence of the South was the consequence of slavery -- and of slavery alone.

The Blacks, not being considered citizens, did not vote. And, though an extra number of votes was given to their masters, the presence of Negroes, keeping away free workers, deprived the masters of the political help that immigration would have brought them. Thus, the power, for long the attribute of the ancient Southern states, worked its way gradually, naturally, and legally to the Northern states.

---

(1) Institution maudite.

Resignation in bad luck is as rare as moderation in success. This old truth was to be confirmed once more. The South saw, approaching slowly but surely, the day when new laws would be imposed on her. These laws, she was convinced, would be her ruin and she would not be able to repel them. Weren't there any means to escape the fate she was foreseeing? "Yes!" answered her lawyers. "The pact by which the states have bound themselves to one another is a contract that can be broken by those who made it. Their right in this respect is expressly reserved. The Southern states have but to ask for it and they will return to their situation before the Union: isolated but sovereign states; free to contract new allegiance; they will recover their independence already shackled; they will escape the yoke of the North and the impending ruin that is forthcoming."

As a note: Here is the text of the ratification by the Virginia delegation of the U. S. A.'s act of constitution.:

"We, the delegates of the people of Virginia, duly elected in pursuance of a recommendation from the General Assembly, and now met in Convention, having fully and freely investigated and discussed the proceedings of the federal Convention, and being prepared, as well as the most mature deliberation hath enabled us, to decide thereon, Do, in the name and in behalf of the people of Virginia, declare and make known, that the powers granted under the Constitution, being derived from the people of the United States, be resumed by them whensoever the same shall be perverted to their injury or oppression, and that every power, not granted thereby, remains with them, and at their will; that, therefore, no right, of any denomination, can be cancelled, abridged,



restrained, or modified by the Congress, by the Senate or House of Representatives, acting in any capacity, by the President, or any department or officer of the United States...."(1)

- 
- (1) Mrs. Boissonnas did not give the rest of the declaration, which continues on these terms: "...except in those instances in which power is given by the Constitution for those purposes; and that, among other essential rights, the liberty of conscience and of the press cannot be cancelled, abridged, restrained, or modified, by any authority of the United States.

"With these impressions, with a solemn appeal to the Searcher of hearts for the purity of our intentions, and under the conviction that whatsoever imperfections may exist in the Constitution ought rather to be examined in the mode prescribed therein, than to bring the Union into danger by delay, with a hope of obtaining amendments previous to the ratification,

"We, the said delegates, in the name and behalf of the people of Virginia, do, by these presents, assent to and ratify the Constitution, recommended on the seventeenth day of September, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, by the federal Convention, for the government of the United States; hereby announcing to all those whom it may concern, that the said Constitution is binding upon the said people, according to an authentic copy hereto annexed, in the words following."

The North, already threatened several times by a secession that had never taken place, did not accept the idea that the grumblers would seriously contemplate a separation. It was dominated by the radical party who, being for centralization, intended, in the name of the greatness of a common fatherland, to annihilate all local opposition, and who was soon to gain the Abolitionist Party as an ally.

The Abolitionists, by the most noble motives, carried the same wishes as the radicals. For a long time, they had thought using only moral means for the emancipation of the slaves, but when they came to understand how greatly their principles would gain from the application of the new rules, they entered eagerly into the fight between parties.

The abolitionists were those who, through moving, eloquent books had revealed the shame and miseries of slavery. They had easily succeeded in inspiring horror for it. From the moment they put their banner next to the one representing the interests of the North, they rallied all the generous minds who were set aflame by the perspective of the emancipation of an unfortunate race.

The problem of slavery, much easier to understand than that of the rights (be they unquestionable or not) of the states, and of their dealings with the federal government -- took rapidly priority, abroad, over all the others. From a distance, the problem of slavery was the only one perceived.



Europe became moved. She thought a new crusade was springing up and branding as pro-slavery all those who, for various reasons, kept aside from the movement to which she was letting herself go, she held no other wish than abolition. Will this brief sketch be sufficient to make the situation understandable? We hardly dare hope so. The following letter by Colonel Lee will illustrate the state of minds in 1856.

"The steamer also brought the President's Message...I was much pleased with the President's Message. His views of the systematic and progressive efforts of certain people at the North to interfere with and change the domestic institutions of the South are truthfully and faithfully expressed. The consequences of their plans and purposes are also clearly set forth. These people must be aware that their object is both unlawful and foreign to them and to their duty, and that this institution for which they are irresponsible and unaccountable, can only be changed by them through the agency of a civil and servile war...

"There are few, I believe, in this enlightened age, who will not acknowledge that slavery as an institution is a moral and political evil in any country. It is useless to expatiate on its disadvantages. I think it a greater evil to the white than to the black race....Their emancipation will sooner result from the mild and melting influences of Christianity than from the storms and tempests of fiery controversy...."

## CHAPTER SIX - FIRST MANIFESTATIONS OF UNREST

We cannot, here, enter into the detail of the fight between parties. Each day it became more venomous. Rivalries, old jealousies, increased its complexity; and on more than one point of the territory, blood had already been shed. In 1859, while he was staying in Arlington, Colonel Lee found himself mixed up with one of the episodes of that troublesome period.

A Kansas farmer -- an aged, hard-working, simple man -- had often taken part in the manifestations launched by the opposing parties. A convinced and passionate abolitionist, John Brown(1) got so exalted in the fight that he came to believe he was to become the liberator of the Blacks. He forgot that all progress built on violence, obtained without regard to laws, is something else than a progress. He thought that a general rising of all the Blacks would hasten the times and would lead immediately to the objective that legal means would take so long to reach.

To begin with, he worked a secret agreement with some slaves who had taken refuge in Canada. Then he established contacts in the principle states. By October, 1859, he believed he was strong enough to stir up the Black population

---

(1) You remember, perhaps, that a poster representing John Brown's gallows, and signed by Victor Hugo, had been exposed in the streets of Paris for a long time.



of Virginia. At the head of 16 Whites and 5 Blacks, John Brown overtook easily -- so far was one of any suspicion -- the Federal Armory and the Arms Factory of Harpers Ferry, proclaimed the liberation of the Blacks, and summoned them to come with haste to pick up the arms that his daring raid had put in his power. At the same time, he abducted from their houses, the principle inhabitants of the town to use them as hostages if he was attacked.

Frightened, the population of Harpers Ferry called the Army to its rescue and turned to the government who, in view of the fact that Colonel Lee was at Arlington, put under his orders a Battalion of Marines, and dispatched him to Harpers Ferry.

His first care was to surround the Federal Armory. The number of insurgents had not increased, not a single Black among those they had just liberated having come to help them. The problem of the hostages was the only serious difficulty, John Brown declaring that they would be executed at the first act of hostility.

In vain, a peace envoy promised him, in the name of the Colonel, that if he liberated the hostages, he would be protected against the furor of the inhabitants and would receive the guarantees of a civil law suit. John Brown refused. He was well conscious that his movement had aborted, but he tried to obtain for himself and his companions the right to gain the frontier freely. He wanted to hand over the



COPYRIGHT, 1911, REVIEW OF REVIEWS, N. Y.

## LINCOLN

THE LAST SITTING—ON THE DAY OF LEE'S SURRENDER

On April 9, 1865, the very day of the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, Lincoln, for the last time, went to the photographer's gallery. As he sits in simple fashion sharpening his pencil, the man of sorrows cannot forget the sense of weariness and pain that for four years has been unbroken. No elation of triumph lights the features. One task is ended—the Nation is saved. But another, scarcely less exacting, confronts him. The States which lay "out of their proper practical relation to the Union," in his own phrase, must be brought back into a proper practical relation. But this task was not for him. Only five days later the sad eyes reflected upon this page closed forever upon scenes of earthly turmoil. Bereft of Lincoln's heart and head, leaders attacked problems of reconstruction in ways that proved unwise. As the mists of passion and prejudice cleared away, both North and South came to feel that this patient, wise, and sympathetic ruler was one of the few really great men in history, and that he would live forever in the hearts of men made better by his presence during those four years of storm.



hostages after being sheltered from any pursuit.

"Don't worry about us; fire, fire;" shouted one of the prisoners, Colonel Lewis Washington, loud enough to be heard outside.

Colonel Lee had agreed with his peace emissary, whom he could see from afar, that the latter would take his hat off if John Brown remained inexorable. The very instant that the hat was slowly raised, the Marines launched their attack with such impetuosity that the hostages were surrounded and separated from the insurgents before the latter had time to use their arms. John Brown, wounded, was protected against the population's fury and handed over, with his companions, to the regular courts. As for Colonel Lee, he regained Texas.

Up until the time we are speaking of (1860), the President of the U. S. A., having always belonged to the Southern Party, had weighed in favor of maintaining the status quo more or less openly. The result was that congressional votes had always been neutralized to a certain extent. This was not a situation that could last.

In 1860, for the first time, a man from the North, Abraham Lincoln -- the rugged carpenter from Illinois -- the one who was to be named by all voters, 'Honest Abe' -- was called to the presidential chair. The election had a definite signification. It warned the Southern states that the days of privileged treatment were gone. It was not because the newly elected president was a fervent abolitionist that they felt

threatened. Lincoln, principally concerned by remaining within the law, proclaimed widely that he wanted to maintain the Union without liberating the slaves; but he also declared as emphatically, that measures -- financial or others -- voted by Congress would be applied strictly.

Four(1) Southern states, soon followed by five others, then requested through their legislatures, the right to withdraw from the Union. They formed a new confederation called the Confederate States of America. Perhaps they thought that they were thus preventing a civil war? On the contrary, their action precipitated it.

In problems that still have the power to arouse the passions of a great people, and in which it is so difficult to attribute the faults with equity -- in problems for which so many thousands of men have known how to fight with such an indomitable energy -- to fight and to die -- one must refrain from uttering a severe word that could be unfair and cruel. Yet, we have to say it -- in our opinion, the North had the right and the duty to maintain the Union. No state could exist if it were to allow the indefinite parceling out of its territory.

The revolution that bereaved the South from its

---

(1) Four Southern states, South Carolina, Texas, Mississippi, and Florida, seceded first; followed a few weeks after by Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee.



leadership was legal. It should have been pacific. Whatever the consequences, the duty of the South was to submit to the President imposed by the majority, as in the past the North had submitted to Mr. Buchanan. The South thought otherwise. The Civil War was its fault. We would be inclined to say its crime if the complex wording of the constitution was not the great culprit. The constitution gave birth to such an exaggeration of federal ideas that most minds gradually came to consider that the real sovereignty belonged to each state. (1)

Anyhow, it is not our purpose to linger on this burning ground. We are simply telling the story of a life, but a life shattered by the fights we are going to witness. We will have said enough of the problem if our reader has understood that, besides the question of abolition, there were other problems, some of which were really difficult to solve. These could, manipulated by circumstances, give rise in people's souls to ardent and sincere patriotic feelings -- but local patriotism, alas, imperiling the common fatherland.

Besides, at the time we are speaking of in 1861, slavery did not hold in America, and in the preoccupation of the parties, the place that Europe was already giving it, and that it was going to take gradually, as the fight went on.

---

(1) See Alexander H. Stephan's The Constitutional View of the Late War.

President Lincoln himself said, "The principle of the Union is alone at stake, not slavery." The Vice-President, Johnson, who was to succeed him, talked the same language, "This country belongs to the White man, and the White man alone must dominate." No one could, at that time, foresee how one's own mind would evolve and what convictions he would reach in 4 years of bloody ordeals. During the conflict, and through the fight itself, convictions grew. Convictions grew stronger, and in each party reached extreme exaltation.

Colonel Lee was then one of those to whom the future was completely veiled. He was residing in Texas, in his command post. He hadn't left it for two years. Isolated, in the middle of the Indians, away from every political current, hardly informed of events, he wrote to Mistress Lee:

"Fort Mason, Texas, 23d January, 1861....I received Everett's 'Life of Washington' which you sent me, and enjoyed its perusal. How his spirit would be grieved could he see the wreck of his mighty labors. I will not, however, permit myself to believe, until all the ground for hope is gone, that the fruit of his noble deeds will be destroyed, and that his precious advice and virtuous example will so soon be forgotten by his countrymen. As far as I can judge by the papers, we are between a state of anarchy and civil war. May God avert both of these evils from us! ....I see that four States have declared themselves out of the Union; four more will apparently follow their example. Then, if the border States



are brought into the abyss of revolution, one half of the country will be arrayed against the other. I must try and be patient and await the end, for I can do nothing to hasten or retard it."

We will see how the evolution of events was going to oblige Colonel Lee to come out of his state of painful expectation and to play an active role -- but equally painful -- in the colossal fight that was threatening.

## CHAPTER SEVEN - HOW GENERAL LEE FOUND HIMSELF

### TO BE A REBEL

Meanwhile, President Lincoln had answered the act of rebellion by declaring, with determination, that he would reestablished the Union, whatever the cost. He had taken decisive measures, and the preparation for war had begun on both sides. Each one found himself in the obligation of choosing his allegiance and of caring for the security of his family and of his own person. From all points of America, and even of Europe, people whose business or pleasures had dispersed returned to their homeland.

There were, in the South, dealers from the North. In the North, citizens from the South, whose family ties, or their business, or simply their choice, had established there. Everyone left his adopted fatherland and returned in haste under the flag of his native state.

It seems quite simple to say, but what pains, what tearings apart -- what forced separations! No category of people suffered more during this period of imminent civil war than that of the military or naval officers. Doubly citizens of the Union, bound together by this military comradeship -- christened in all languages, "Fraternity of arms" -- the problem was more complex for them. With the first rumors of war, General Scott, in charge of organizing the Army for the Northern states, feared the burden would be too heavy for his old age, and thought of Robert Lee, who had just been



promoted to the rank of General.

No telegraph yet, no regular postal service in the vast western solitude, Scott sent to Texas an envoy proposing to Lee to exert the Supreme Command under his name. The attitude of Virginia who, by a vote on April the 4th, had refused the proposition of alliance with the Confederate States, made him think that Lee would feel free to accept his offer. While the messenger was on his long trip, Lee had delegated his command to a Lieutenant and was proceeding towards Arlington, where his family was assembled. But, events were following one another with speed. Virginia, though belonging to the group of Southern states by its situation and its laws, had remained faithful to the Union; and one had been able to hope that she would have a role of mediation between them. Would this have been the case, under the direct influence of General Lee? His presence was greatly missed during that troubled time. He never hid, even in the gravest circumstances that, in his opinion, if he had arrived in time, perhaps appeasement would have prevailed. Virginia, mother of the states, such as she was called, would have been a link between the rebels and the central power. Peace might have been preserved. But, he was still traveling when the Presidential Decree was published demanding the mobilization of the Virginia quota of troops against the revolted states. For the Virginian people, it was the straw that broke the camel's back. They could not bring themselves to fight those they called their real brothers --

their brothers of the South; and their parliament, conscious of the impossibility of remaining neutral, voted solemnly for a separation -- a secession.

The vote was on April 7th, the same day Lee was arriving at Arlington, without having met the messenger sent to find him. The 18th, he had one interview(1) with his ancient chief in Mexico, General Scott. Far from accepting the commandment, Lee announced his intention to resign his rank.

"Lee, you have made the greatest mistake of your life;" answered his old friend, "but I feared it would be so." "Think it over again." Then began for Lee, put between the call from the President and one from his native land -- the land to which he had a double allegiance -- an interior fight, the intense pain of which his wife (the grand-daughter of Washington) described when she wrote, "My husband shed tears of blood before making his decision." (2)

After two days of inward fights, of regrets, of poignant anguish, he wrote to General Scott:

---

(1) According to Mr. Lee Child, General Lee: His Life and his Campaigns; the Supreme Command was offered by President Lincoln himself.

(2) Remember, Robert Lee had been raised at the expense of The State of Virginia. That's why he speaks of a double allegiance.



"GENERAL -- Since my interview with you on the 18th inst., I have felt that I ought not to retain my commission in the army. I therefore tender my resignation, which I request you will recommend for acceptance. It would have been presented at once but for the struggle it has cost me to separate myself from a service to which I have devoted all the best years of my life, and all the ability I possessed.

"During the whole of that time, more than a quarter of a century, I have experienced nothing but kindness from my Superiors, and the most cordial friendship from my comrades. To no one, General, have I been as much indebted as to yourself for uniform kindness and consideration; and it has always been my ardent desire to merit your approbation. I shall carry to the grave the most grateful recollections of your kind consideration; and your name and fame will always be dear to me.

"Save in defence of my native State, I never desire again to draw my sword...Your sincerely devoted, Robert E. Lee"

General Lee had still other ties to break than those which bound him to a career faithfully loved and accomplished with dignity -- the dearer, closer ties of family affections. The same day, he wrote to one of his sisters, established with her husband in one of the Northern states:

"...I have been waiting for a 'more convenient season,' which has brought to many before me deep and lasting regret. Now we are in a state of war which will yield to nothing. The

whole South is in a state of revolution, into which Virginia, after a long struggle, has been drawn; and though I recognize no necessity for this state of things, and would have forborne and pleaded to the end for redress of grievances, real or supposed, yet, in my own person, I had to meet the question whether I should take part against my native State.

"With all my devotion to the Union, and the feeling of loyalty and duty of an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home. I have, therefore, resigned my commission in the army, and, save in defense of my native State, with the sincere hope that my poor services may never be needed, I hope I may never be called on to draw my sword. I know you will blame me; but you must think as kindly of me as you can, and believe that I have endeavored to do what I thought right. To show you the feeling and struggle it has cost me, I send a copy of my letter of resignation. I have no time for more.....May God guard and protect you and yours, and shower upon you everlasting blessings, is the prayer of your devoted brother, R. E. Lee"

And so, this is how General Lee found himself to be a rebel. It is easy, no doubt, to condemn him, but wouldn't it be fairer to condemn, particularly, the political system that put a man between two duties almost equally sacred and obliged him to forfeit one or the other?

If one considers that Virginia, with a size almost as big

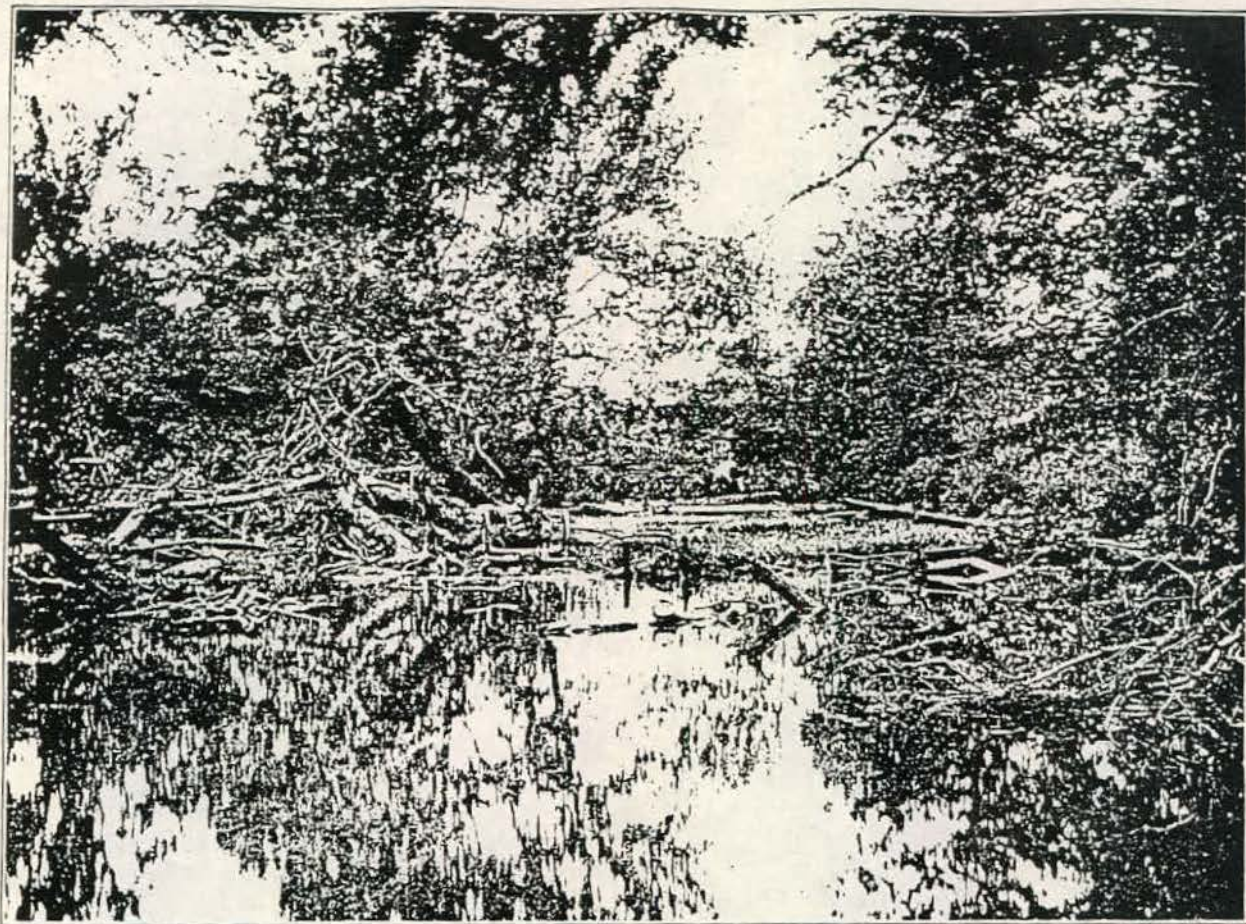


as England, was established since 1776; that her inhabitants, since that time, had continued to consider the convention as the regular and legitimate power of the State; that it was this convention, and not the individual people, who was in charge, according to general understanding, of keeping or breaking off the federal pact; that by several acts, Virginia had, since the beginning, reserved for herself the right to recover her independence; one can understand that, once the breach was accomplished, the inhabitants' duty was not so easy to perceive. At least let us establish, before ending, that later on, when he obeyed to the call of the Virginia Convention, Lee did not intend to defend slavery -- which he called "a moral and political evil in any country. It is useless to expatiate on its disadvantages. I think it a greater evil to the White than to the Black race," said he.

He simply intended to defend Virginia's right to modify, by herself, her own laws.

It is in this belief, and the right that Virginia had to command his obedience -- even against the government of the Union -- that resides, in our opinion, the mistake of General Lee. But, because his belief was sincere, because his mistake was loyal, we dare, without hiding our regrets, claim for him the deep respect of all noble-minded men.





*Copyright by Patriot Pub. Co.*

#### BULL RUN—BATTLEFIELD OF THE MORNING, JULY 21, 1861

Along Bull Run Creek on the morning of July 21st Tyler's division vigorously attacked from the east the Confederates under Longstreet and Beauregard on the western bank. By this attack McDowell hoped to succeed in falling unexpectedly on the rear of the Confederate left with the force sent on a detour of some three miles to the north. A charge of fresh troops brought forward by Beauregard in person in the late afternoon started the panic of the raw Union volunteers. . . . "Men who had fought courageously an hour before, had become as hares fleeing from pursuing hounds. The confusion was increased and multiplied by the presence among the fugitives of a multitude of panic-stricken picnickers, Congressmen, civilians of every sort, and lavishly dressed women—who had gone out in carriages and carryalls to see the spectacle of a Federal army walking over the Confederates. The Confederates fed fat for days afterward upon the provisions that the picnickers abandoned in their flight."



#### GENERAL BEAUREGARD'S HEADQUARTERS

The handsome old colonial mansion known as the McLean House was near Manassas station, not far from Blackburn's Ford, the scene of a sharp encounter preliminary to the battle of Bull Run. Tyler's division of McDowell's army, finding the Confederates had retreated from Centreville, attacked near here on the morning of July 18th. A vigorous cannonade opened the action, and a shell landing in the fireplace of the McLean house deprived General Beauregard of his dinner.



## CHAPTER EIGHT - FIRST HOSTILITIES

### BULL RUN

The population of the newly Confederate States, four times less numerous than that of the Northern States, (1) but better prepared for the job of war by the conditions of its daily life, was rapidly organized; and the first successes were for her. Besides, the North had a complete confidence in the superiority of its strength, and did not seem in a hurry to use it. It considered the rebellion as a flash in the pan that would die out by itself. The means used to limit its extension proved to be insufficient.

Surprised by its failures, the North was to make, before our own country(2), the cruel experience that cost us so much. To decree the conscription of men is easy. To find the money to equip them and feed them is also possible, but the military qualities, the discipline, the experience, the power of endurance -- the whole moral and physical preparation that is necessary for officers and soldiers -- can't be decreed.

With blasts of dollars, the North made many cannons;

---

(1) According to The Count of Paris, the difference would even be greater. His calculations evaluate the number of men capable of bearing arms in the North at 4 million; in the South, at 680,000. He adds that, in the South, 351,000 men were enrolled the first year.

(2) France -- Mrs. Boissonnas is French.

assembled 500,000, then 800,000, then 2 1/2 million men. It obtained an armed crowd. It did not have, for a long time at least, the army that was gradually to develop during the war itself by dint of perseverance and energy.

In the South, contrary-wise, from the very beginning the effort was general and one could feel that the entire population was participating in it. Besides, if it was rather difficult to instill militarization more rapidly in the commercial and industrial population of the North, there was less to do to transform into soldiers the rugged planters of Virginia or those of Georgia and Alabama, incessantly riding over their immense savannahs; or again the rugged pioneers of Texas, seasoned by their constant fights against the Indians.

Finally, the majority of officers trained at West Point happened to belong, by their birth, to the Southern states. They gathered under the flag of their native land and brought the new Confederation precious elements of knowledge and method. The first shot was fired April 12th, 1861, against Fort Sumter. A few military engagements followed, but of mediocre importance.

Then, at the end of July, took place the great Battle of Bull Run near Manassas. Attacked by 36,000 Confederates, the Northern army, counting 55,000, scattered after a few hours of fighting, as if taken by a



sudden panic. (1) This victory raised very high -- too high -- the hopes of the South; whereas the defeat gave the North a warning from which they knew how to profit.

As the war was escalating, General Lee, seeing that the Virginian soil itself was invaded, had given in to the call of his fellow citizens. "I am ready to take any position the country assigns to me, and do the best I can," he had said with simplicity. He had been sent to the western part of Virginia. He had to repair serious failures and endeavor to organize the defense of the region, but the sympathies of the local people were with the cause of the North, and they ended up by rallying it completely.

Lee was still at that post when the government at Richmond, worrying about the coasts of Georgia and Carolina, threatened by the North's powerful Navy, put him in charge of fortifying the ports of those two states. This was far from the Supreme Command offered by Scott, but no thought of personal ambition had ever haunted General Lee. To serve his

---

(1) The numbers we give here, and those we will give further on, of the strength present at each battle, are borrowed from Swinton, the historian for the North. They have been adopted by Miss Mason in her A Popular Life of General Robert E. Lee, excellent work from which we have often borrowed, and by other writers of different tendencies.

country was the only dream to which he let himself go.

It was known that prodigies of armament had been done in the U. S. A. Navy. Its ships, covered with iron, could bear guns of an enormous caliber, used until now, only in fortifications. The imagination of engineers had taken free rein. They had known how to vary indefinitely the shapes and aptitudes of their ships, among which the famous Monitor, with its mobile tower and its 120 units of gun, was not the most remarkable.

The problem was, therefore, to bring the coastal defenses at par with what one agrees in calling the progress of our times. General Lee fortified the long coast entrusted to him with the consciousness and the care for details that belonged only to him. It is from the middle of his operations that he wrote, from Savannah, to one of his daughters this letter, so tender:

"Are you really sweet sixteen? That is charming, and I want to see you more than ever. But when that will be, my darling child, I have no idea. I hope after the war is over we may again all be united, and I may have some pleasant years with my dear children, that they may cheer the remnant of my days...Rob says he is told that you are a young woman. I have grown so old, and become so changed, that you would not know me. But I love you just as much as ever, and you know how great a love that is...,

"This is a serious period, indeed, and the time looks



dark, but it will brighten again, and I hope a kind Providence will yet smile upon us, and give us freedom and independence....

"...You must do all you can for our dear country. Pray for the aid of our Father in heaven, for our suffering soldiers and their distressed families. I pray day and night for you. May Almighty God guide, guard, and protect you! I have but little time to write, my dear daughter. you must excuse my short and dull letters. Write me when you can, and love always your devoted father,

'R. E. Lee''

During six months -- the winter months -- General Lee scoured without rest, nor respite, the coast entrusted to his care. In the first days of Spring, a sudden order summoned him to Richmond, which the new Confederation had turned into its capital. The situation, from excellent the previous year, had become critical, and President Davis, waking up to reality, put Lee in charge of the defense of the whole country.

What had happened? How did the Confederates, whom we saw victorious in July, 1861, at Bull Run, find themselves, so few months after, in such a dangerous situation? We shall try to make it understandable.

Blinded by the smokes of their first, and brilliant, success, imagining, because the principle European governments had gratified them with a quality of belligerence, that those



# IRISH MENT



**-BOODIED MEN**

**WILLIAMS,**  
now of the 35TH IRISH MASS. REG'T.

and our IRISH HERO,

**CORAN**

other IRISH REGIMENTS.

**Bounty**

will receive the STATE AID.

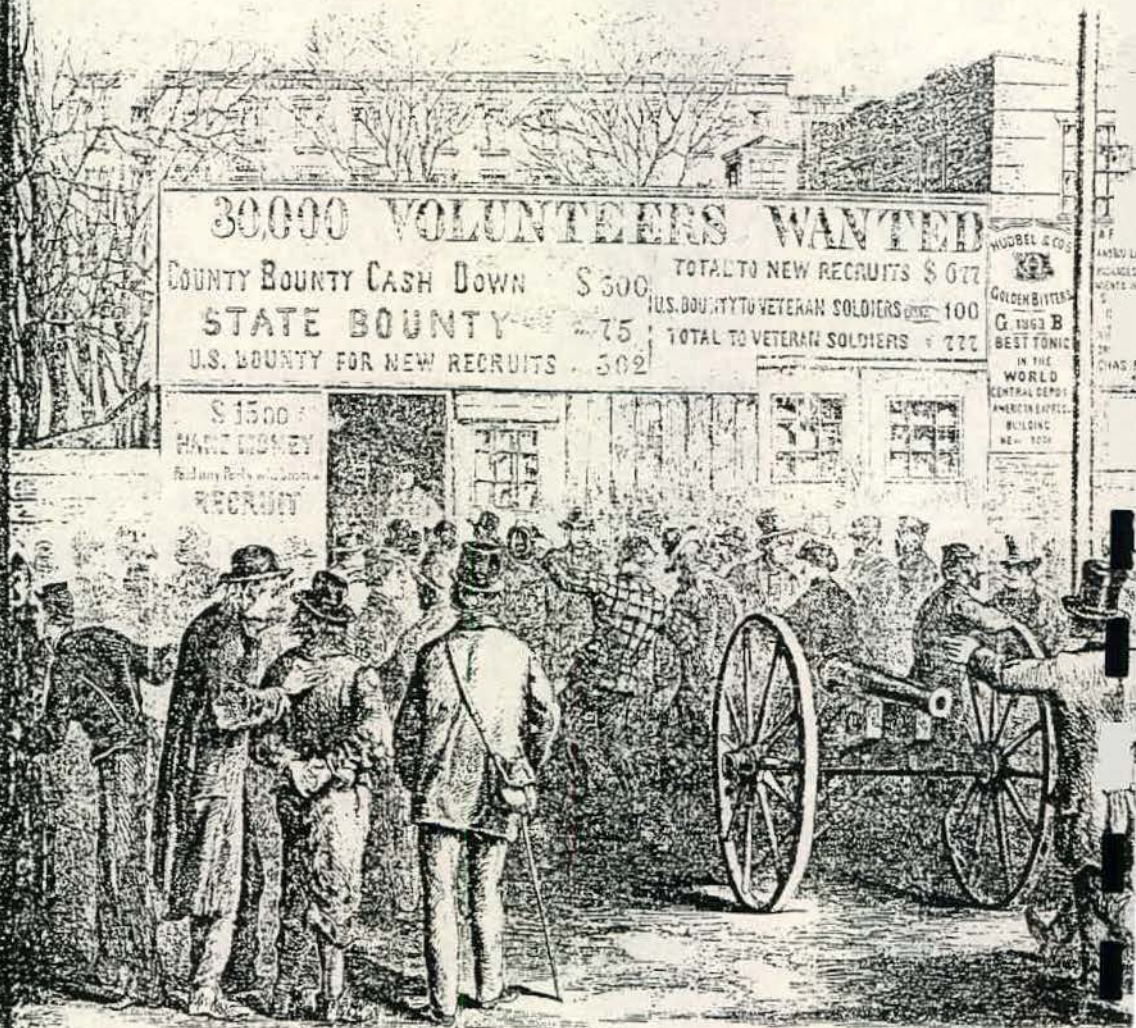
They will go at once into comfortable quarters and receive

weekly allowance. Apply immediately to

**S. or, Lieut. LEONARD!**  
RIDGE STREET, BOSTON.

men who fought in the  
of foreign birth or parent-  
immigrant soldiers came  
Ireland. This poster  
ill vacancies in an Irish  
used in Boston. Many  
its had reputations for  
nd off the battlefield. The  
ri's Irish Brigade once  
lights breaking out in a  
the unit had only 800

The bounty system bolstered lagging enlistments by paying new recruits to volunteer. The system was plagued by "bounty jumpers," who signed up, collected their money, and then quickly deserted to sign up with a different regiment, also for cash. One man reportedly repeated the process more than thirty times before he was caught. This wood-engraving (below) shows a crowd of men in front of recruiting office in New York City.





same governments would admit their Confederation to the rank of a power, the Southerners had believed that their task was almost accomplished and had fallen into a feeling of security that threatened to be fatal.

The soldiers had been discharged for the Winter, and it seemed that the South counted only on its negotiators to achieve its independence.

During that time, the North, on the contrary, had abandoned its dream of an easy triumph, and was organizing itself with a feverish ardor. Its immense financial resources allowed it to spend without sparing in all directions. All the factories were working for the armament of the country, while enormous bonuses were afforded to the enlisting men. (1)

In the first days of Spring, 800,000 men, abundantly equipped with everything that could add to the power of their efforts, had started to move. While Louisiana was taken by surprise by the Federal Fleet; Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri were conquered almost without fighting. An army followed the course of the Mississippi. Descending from the northern part, it was to take, one after the other, the fortresses built on the banks of the river and use them to

---

(1) In 1862, already, the volunteer, besides \_\_\_\_ francs, received \_\_ francs per month; and his wife, \_\_ francs per month. (Taken from The Potomac Campaign, The Prince de Joinville.)

isolate the eastern states from their allies in the west.

Lastly, another army, commanded by General McClellan and supported by numerous detached army elements, was going up the River James at that very moment, and was threatening Richmond. The Congress of the South realized the peril. At the time, it had, through an exaggerated respect of legality, sent home the soldiers engaged for three months.

It's under those circumstances that General Lee was called to Richmond to serve as military adviser to President Jefferson Davis. Time was running out. There was not a single army to oppose to the invaders. The danger, so obvious, helped Lee to obtain energetic measures, and conscription was established.

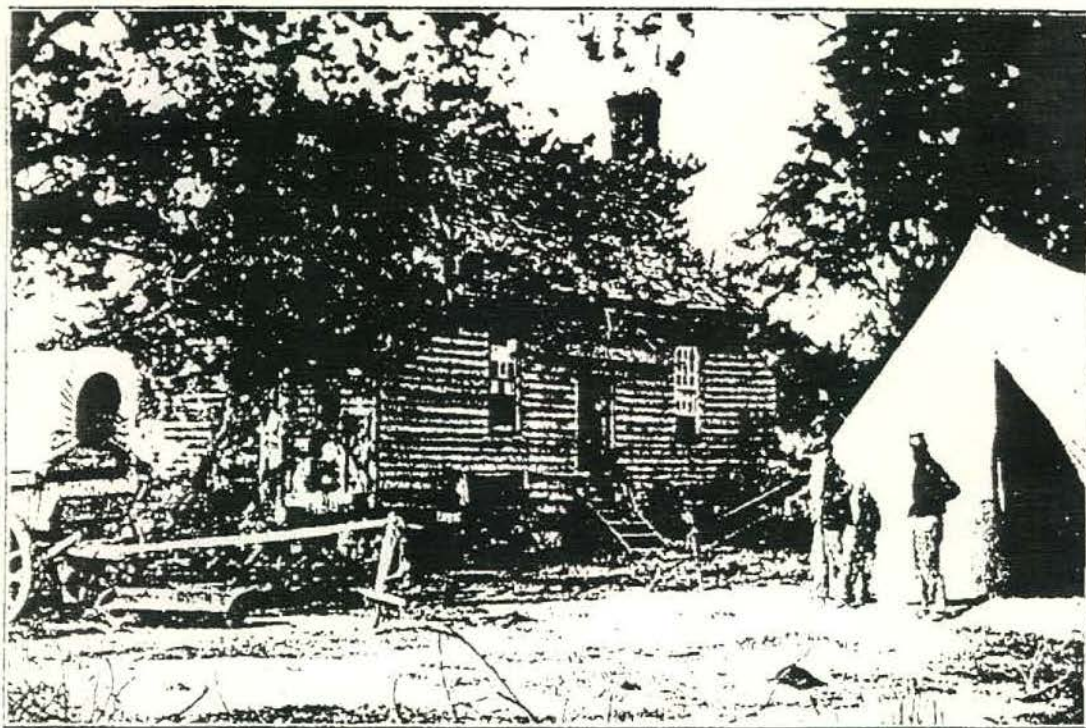
Men then arrived, but resources to arm and equip the recruits were lacking. The strong Northern Navy blocked the coasts vigorously; and the South, congested with cotton, tobacco, sugar, could not exchange its products against the arms, the metals -- the food even -- that it lacked. The City of Richmond, the first to be threatened, did not have a single gun on its walls; and when it received a provision of powder, the Federals were only a few miles away.



---

## FAIR OAKS

---



A HAVEN FOR THE WOUNDED—THE "SEVEN PINES" FARM-HOUSE SERVING AS A HOSPITAL  
FOR HOOKER'S DIVISION, SHORTLY AFTER THE BATTLE OF MAY 30-JUNE 1, 1862

CHAPTER NINE - LEE, COMMANDER IN CHIEF,  
COLD HARBOR - THE SEVEN DAY FIGHTING

It was on the 31st of May, 1862 that the Confederate Army, commanded by General Johnson was able to set forth and march towards the firing line. Its organization was far from being completed. The very morning of the first encounter, General Lee was still dispatching to the army the company of cavalry which was going to prove itself very useful. It numbered 300 men, and so great was the lack of armaments that it had been necessary to give them rifles of seven different models.

Stopped several times by deluging rains that had turned the region into an immense swamp, General McClellan was arriving too late to surprise Richmond.

However incomplete it was, Johnson's army was, nevertheless, an obstacle with which one had to reckon. The first clash took place at Fair Oaks. (1) During the whole day, the efforts and the skill of McClellan failed against the steadiness of the Southerners. Near the evening, General Johnson was seriously wounded by a shell burst. He had to be taken away from the battlefield; and his disappearance at the most crucial time of the action caused a disorder, then a movement of retreat on the left. There was not a minute to

---

(1) Fair Oaks is the name adopted by the North. The South called it Seven Pines.



lose. General Lee left his post with the President and took the command of the army.

That responsibility was a serious thing to accept under such circumstances. The enemy guns were only five miles from Richmond, and the assailants were already boasting, as if the capital of rebellion were already conquered. Seven thousand Confederates littered the battlefield. Another defeat, and all would be lost.

The Southerners were spared this new defeat by the energy of their commandant. McClellan did not succeed in gaining an inch of land. Days passed without either army taking the risk of a new battle which, for either one of them, could turn into a disaster. However, General Lee had serious reasons for wanting to precipitate the outcome of the situation. Munitions were going to lack -- he would soon have to give up containing the enemy.

On June 12th, he sent fifteen hundred horsemen, under command of General Stewart, on a raid. In 10 days of riding constantly through enemy territory, the column circumvented the Northern army; destroyed roads, bridges, telegraph poles, and brought back a good number of prisoners. It returned to camp on June 22nd.

Inspired by the information he got from Stewart, Lee recalled, secretly, Johnson's corps; which, 90 miles away, was threatening the City of Washington. Then, pushing all his forces ahead, he gave, on the 26th, the signal of a battle

that the unyielding spirit of both sides was to prolong during seven horrible days. (1)

General Jackson, whom we have just mentioned for the first time, was the hero of Bull Run -- the first important victory of the South. Former pupil at West Point, then artillery officer during the Mexican campaign, finally professor of mathematics, Jackson had made himself known, much more by his strange manifestations of an ardent and sincere piety than by any remarkable military gift. His real value had been revealed at Bull Run. He had deserved there, by his unshakable firmness, the nickname of 'Stonewall,' by which we will often call him. When General Lee called on him, he was successfully withholding, with 20 thousand men, two Federal armies camped in front of Washington.

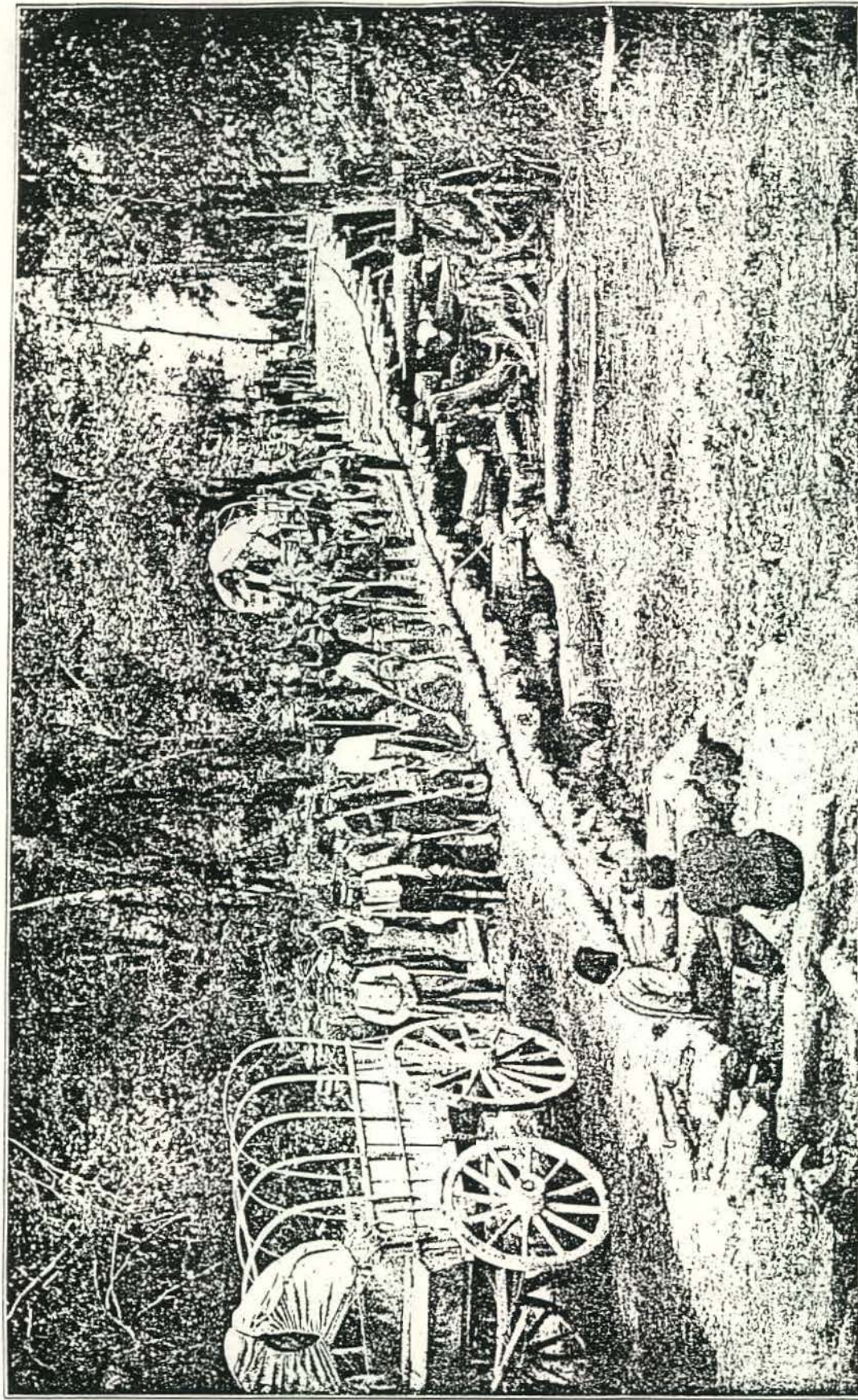
The 26th of June, as we have said, Lee decided to take the offensive, and did it with vigor. The Federals were compelled to retreat; but if they gave up the battlefield, they kept the positions they had fortified beforehand as a shield in case of retreat.

The following day -- the 27th -- action resumed with daylight. It was a Brigade of young recruits who had the perilous honor of attacking the entrenchments of the Federals.

---

(1) Those battles were: Battle of Cold Harbor, White Oak Swamp, Mechanicsville, Gaines Mill, Savage Station, James River, and Melbourne Hill.





Copyright by National Pub. Co.

#### A VICTORY OVER SWAMP AND FLOOD

Here we see the Fifth New Hampshire Infantry, reinforced by details from the Sixty-fourth New York and from the Irish Brigade, at work in the swamp strengthening the upper bridge across the Chickahominy so as to enable Sumner's troops to cross. The bridge had been completed on the night of May 29, 1862, and Colonel Cross, of the Fifth New Hampshire, was the first man to ride over it. The heavy rains on the night of May 30th had so

loosened the supports that when Sumner led his troops across on the afternoon of May 31st only the weight of the cautiously marching column kept the logs in place. Sumner named it the Grapevine Bridge because of its tortuous course. It enabled his troops to turn the tide at Fair Oaks and ward off Federal defeat on the first day. After they had crossed much of the Grapevine Bridge was submerged by the rising flood of the Chickahominy.



It behaved decently under their powerful artillery, but it was a rough ordeal for such inexperienced soldiers; and General Lee saw the necessity of sustaining them. A brook was running between the two armies. Division after Division crossed it to climb the fortified slopes. General Lee was pressing their march; and yet, counting what he had left, he was evaluating the time when all his reserves would be engaged in the fight.

Southern historians like to represent Lee on this beautiful, fine day of June; firm on his gray horse, Traveler -- the horse that was to remain faithful in all his campaigns -- wearing a simple uniform without any decorations, observing, with calm, the course of the action. One would think they wanted to honor, from its first manifestation, that military example whose glory never ceased growing for three years and possessed the rare privilege of remaining pure and undaunted amidst the hatreds and rancors of a civil war.

In spite of his 54 years, General Lee was still the intrepid horseman of Arlington -- the heroic walker of Pedrigale. He had lost nothing yet of his youth's elastic vigor. His tall size, the regularity of his features, the penetrating but kind expression of his dark eyes, his serious but always kindly manners, commanded respect at first sight. Here was, without doubt, the Chief one must obey. But what opened all hearts to him was the charm -- so difficult to define, even by those who have felt it -- that natures really





"STONEWALL" JACKSON—TWO WEEKS BEFORE HIS MORTAL WOUND

The austere, determined features of the victor of Chancellorsville, just as they appeared two weeks before the tragic shot that cost the





sincere and devoted -- natures outstandingly great -- carry within themselves. He added to this the youthful expression that habitual benevolent and pure thoughts preserve in a face, in spite of years. Man of duty, passionate citizen, convinced Christian; Robert Lee ignored all the unhealthy ambitions -- even that of personal glory. His army, for him, represented his share of duty in the torn-apart fatherland. He was absorbed by it and was to prove himself, in all circumstances, as careful of its honor as of its comfort. His soldiers felt it and trusted him. They knew they were in good hands -- in hands that were affectionate, far-sighted, trustworthy. They knew that a noble intelligence was working for their good and their glory; that their General was theirs -- undoubtedly theirs -- with all his thoughts, all his heart, all his ardor, and -- with its significance in the army of a Christian people -- all his virile prayers of a believer.

Motionless, Lee, while he was urging his troops along, was waiting with a secret anxiety. He was waiting for Jackson, and Jackson was not arriving. The last Division had just entered into combat, when, at last, a frenzied cry rises and travels through all the ranks -- "Jackson, Stonewall Jackson!" and the hero of Bull Run comes galloping towards his Chief.

"The Almighty had made both these human beings truly great; to only one of them had He given the additional grace of looking great." Jackson, meager, bent over a skinny horse





A KING'S SON IN CAMP

In 1861 there arrived the first great opportunity to study warfare in the field since the campaigns of Napoleon, and these young men of royal blood expected at no distant day to be the leaders of a war of their own to recover the lost Bourbon throne of France. The three distinguished guests of the Army of the Potomac seated at the farther end of the camp-dinner-table are, from right to left, the Prince de Joinville, son of King Louis Philippe, and his two nephews, the Count de Paris and the Duc de Chartres, sons of the Duc d'Orleans. They came to Washington in September, 1861, eager to take some part in the great conflict for the sake of the experience it would give them. President Lincoln welcomed them, bestowed upon each the honorary rank of Colonel, and assigned them to the staff of General McClellan. Officially merely guests at his quarters, they acted as aides-de-camp to McClellan, bearing despatches and the like, frequently under fire. They distinguished themselves at the battle of Gaines' Mill. The Prince de Joinville made a painting of that engagement which became widely published.

In the lower picture the Count de Paris and the Duc de Chartres are trying their skill at dominoes after dinner. Captain Leclerc, on the left, and Captain Mohain, on the right, are of their party. A Union officer has taken the place of the Prince de Joinville. It was to perfect their skill in a greater and grimmer game that these young men came to America. At Yorktown they could see the rehabilitated fortifications of Cornwallis, which men of their own blood had helped to seize, now amplified by the latest methods of defensive warfare. Exposed to the fire of the Napoleon field pieces imported by the Confederacy, they could compare their effectiveness with that of the huge rifled Dahlgrens, the invention of an American admiral. General McClellan testified that ever in the thick of things they performed their duties to his entire satisfaction. At the close of the Peninsula Campaign the royal party returned to France, but watched the war with great interest to its close.



LEARNING THE GAME

Copyright by Patriot Pub. Co.



he hardly knew how to ride, haggard -- or distracted -- made with General Lee the most striking contrast; but he also had proved himself, and his name was a power by itself.

As his Battalions gather with Lee's forces, a new ardor seizes the Confederates. They fight, gain foot-by-foot, thumb-by-thumb, the land that the Federals are defending bravely until six o'clock. At that time, to make the best of the last hours of daylight, Lee masses all his forces in front of the indented hills, the summits of which are still in the hands of the adversaries, and launches the supreme assault. This time, the Northern soldiers give in, break off, and considering that the battle is lost, shoulder their rifles and deliberately abandon the field.(1)

In vain, their Generals rushed to face them and bring them back to the firing line. The ordeal had been too great for those improvised soldiers. They persist to turn their backs on their enemy.

Three Frenchmen, come from Europe in the noble purpose of helping to liberate the Blacks, were serving in McClellan's army. One of them has kept for us the moving description of

---

(1) The Prince du Joinville writes in Campagne du Potomac, "There is no panic. People are not running with a scare or fright, but deaf to all cause, the men leave deliberately, the rifle on their shoulder, like people who are fed up and no longer believe in success."





THE TANGLED RETREAT

*Copyright by Patriot Pub. Co.*

Through this well-nigh impassable morass of White Oak Swamp, across a single long bridge, McClellan's wagon trains were being hurried the last days of June, 1862. On the morning of the 30th, the rear-guard of the army was hastily tramping after them, and by ten o'clock had safely crossed and destroyed the bridge. They had escaped in the nick of time, for at noon "Stonewall" Jackson opened fire upon Richardson's division and a terrific artillery battle ensued for the possession of this, the single crossing by which it was possible to attack McClellan's rear. The Federal batteries were compelled to retire but Jackson's crossing was prevented on that day by the infantry.



a shortcoming to which his experience in the African Campaign had not prepared him.

The Prince du Joinville, The Count of Paris, and The Duke of Chartres, sword in hand, tried, among the Federal officers, to cut the road of the run-aways. The multitude refused to stop. The Battle of Cold Harbor(1) was lost for the North. It had revealed the sort of weakness that improvised armies are subject to -- prompt in heroism, but sometimes also in breakdown. Nothing was left but for McClellan to try to avoid a disaster. The following day, the army was in full retreat, but its General was, even then, going to prove his genius and see his fame grow.

---

(1) Cold Harbor for the South; Gaine's Hill for the North.

## CHAPTER TEN

### MCCLELLAN'S RETREAT; POPE SUCCEEDS TO HIM

While Lee endeavored to get ahead of his enemy, and asked Richmond for means of transportation, reinforcements, munitions he lacked, McClellan defended himself artfully, and used, to cover his march, the obstacles of the region he was crossing. He deliberately cast himself in an immense swamp<sup>(1)</sup> that his artillery could cross only on a causeway made of tree trunks cut and laid side-by-side. It was impossible for the assailants to follow the Federals otherwise than by this way that was already disappearing under the mud. Right and left, there was no ground. However, each day was marked by a fight. The 29th at Savage Station; the 30th at Melbourne Hill on the banks of the James River where the Federal Army recovered the help of its gun boats. There ceased the pursuit.

If General Lee had not destroyed the enemy, at least he had reduced it to a powerless state for a long time. He had saved Richmond. It was a moment of joy, such as Lee needed to soften the bitterness of his patriotic pain. "Except for the defense of my native land, I hope not to have to draw my sword ever again," said he. Since he had believed it his duty to take part in this heart-rending fight of Americans against Americans, it was a comfort, a joy -- a fleeting one perhaps -- but ineffable, to have succeeded in liberating his native

---

(1) White Oak Swamp.



land from the ravages of invasion.

Let us add that the war, since General Lee was Commander in Chief, had taken a regular character it had not possessed until then. It was no longer a series of sudden convulsions displayed the first year -- efforts badly controlled of an exalted national feeling. Now, the Federals found facing them a calm and strong resistance. They perceived from the movements of the army that the proficiency of an experienced Chief was directing it. They had the proof, through progress in discipline, in moderation -- the effects of which they could see -- that a new spirit was presiding over every action.

McClellan made no mistake about it; and, on July 7th, he sent his government a memorandum to enlighten it on the respective positions of the parties; reminding the principles of the law of nations -- that America was prone to neglect, and that our poor Europe seems, alas, to have forgotten. "This rebellion," he said, "has assumed the character of a war. As such, it should be regarded and it should be conducted upon the highest principles known to Christian civilization. It should not be a war looking to the subjection of any state in any event, it should not be at all a war upon population, but against armed forces and political organization. Neither confiscation of property, political executions, territorial organizations of states, nor forcible abolition of slavery should be contemplated for a moment. In

prosecuting the war, all private property and unarmed persons should be strictly protected...all private property taken for military use should be paid...pillage and waste should be treated as high crimes ...offensive demeanor by the military toward citizens promptly rebuked. Military arrests should not be tolerated except in places where active hostilities exist...military government should be confined to the preservation of public order and the protection of political right...a system of policy thus constitutional and pervaded by the influences of Christianity and freedom would receive the support of almost all truly loyal men, would deeply impress the rebel masses and all foreign nations, and it might be humbly hoped that it would commend itself to the favor of the Almighty."

McClellan did not limit himself to preaching respect or pity for the adversaries; he gave the example himself. At the beginning of the campaign, it so happened that he was occupying the White House -- abode where Washington had met his wife to be, where he had been married, and which was, at that time, the property of Mrs. Lee. As soon as McClellan learned who the house belonged to, he forbade its entry and established himself in an out building. It is unfortunate to have to say that this same White House was ravaged, looted, burned, the very day after McClellan left it; for the noble feelings of the General were poorly shared around him. A great number of Washington's most precious souvenirs were thus



the prey of flames.

It seemed, moreover, that the most dear homes of the Lee family were doomed to ruin. From the beginning of hostilities, Arlington, used as an advanced post by the Federals, had been devastated; and the frequent passings of troops had completed the destructions. (1)

Mrs. Lee, deprived of all movements by a premature paralysis, had taken refuge in Richmond with her daughters. In spite of her handicaps, she was to take a great part in the organization of help for the wounded. As for General Lee's three sons, they served in the army. The eldest, Custis, with his father; the second under the orders of Stewart; the third, Robert, a young man hardly 16, was a simple volunteer in Jackson's corps. But, we must revert to McClellan.

He would have had more influence on his government had he been victorious. His noble language was disliked after a defeat. The commandment was withdrawn from him and entrusted to General Pope.

General Pope had neither the moderation nor the talent of his predecessor. He tried to proceed by intimidation; and the war took, under his command, a character of savage brutality

---

(1) Arlington was, shortly afterwards, by order of the government, converted into a cemetery. One evaluates the number of Federal soldiers buried there to be 30 thousand.

it had not known until then. One's heart bleeds at the reading of facts, the horror of which has been revealed to us by our recent experience. One has the impression of being plunged again in the War of France and in the Prussian behavior. The soldiers were left full liberty in their dealings with the inhabitants. Hostages were taken among the civilians to guarantee the peacefulness of the country, and we find again the Prussian injustice towards snipers in the refusal to recognize as belligerent the bushwacker soldiers who were regularly enrolled in the light cavalry of the Confederates.

These cruel measures aroused General Lee's indignation, and with the approbation of his government, he wrote to the Secretary of War in Washington to point out certain odious actions that had recently been perpetrated, and inform him of the measures he was about to take to prevent their renewal. He warned that, regarding Pope and his principle officers, he considered as cancelled the convention recently signed for the exchange of prisoners -- convention that they had broken by cold-blooded murders. But, he added, "The President also instructs me to inform you that we renounce our right of retaliation on the innocent, and will continue to treat the private soldiers of General Pope's army as prisoners-of-war....While the President considers that the facts referred to would justify a refusal on our part to execute the cartel by which we have agreed to liberate an



excess of prisoners-of-war in our hands, a sacred regard to plighted faith, which shrinks from the semblance of breaking a promise, precludes a resort to such an extremity....signed, Robert E. Lee, General Commanding."

This letter was taken into consideration. General Pope found himself compelled to cancel his orders; and the war, already so disastrous, was not aggravated -- at least in Virginia -- by measures so cruel. Let us add that there happened to be, in the South, officers to imitate Pope; and that the perversion of moral sense -- cursed fruit of a long war -- gave ground later on to blame both sides for barbaric actions equally sinful -- equally odious. Lee's army remained always innocent of such excesses.(1) The ardent affection that the soldiers felt for him preserved them, better than his strict surveyance, from committing acts that would have deeply hurt his conscience as a Chief, because he considered them as crimes.

---

(1) See the reports of Colonel Freemantel, Officer of the British Army, detached to the headquarters of the Virginian Army.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN - SECOND BATTLE OF MANASSAS:

### SECOND LIBERATION OF VIRGINIA IN MARYLAND

The first days of August, 1862, had arrived. At the head of 180 thousand men, General Pope was holding the lines of the Rappahannock, north of Richmond. He protected Washington without ceasing to threaten the capital of the rebellion. South, McClellan, to whom one had finally left an army, though depriving him of his position as Commander-in-Chief, was preparing to cross the James River. General Lee, alone, had to face, at the same time, those two enemies. Recruiting an army had been difficult. Hardly did he number 50 thousand men under his orders. He decided to keep for himself the line of the James River and detached the best part of his troops, under the command of Jackson.

On the 9th, at Cedar Run, Jackson came into contact with the left wing of Pope's army and overthrew it completely. The speed of his movements did not allow the Federals to realize his numerical weakness. However, one of his Brigades weakened for a while under the fire. Seeing it waiver -- perhaps ready to withdraw -- Jackson dashes forward, head bare, hand raised in a movement that was familiar to him; and an enthusiastic cry rises among the Southerners -- "Stonewall Jackson, Stonewall Jackson!" And, forgetting the danger, they follow their Chief to the enemy lines which he penetrates with them. "I thought of myself as a simple Colonel at the head of a Regiment," said Jackson in the evening as he was



apologizing for having forgotten his role.

Pope considered it was not prudent to risk a second defeat, and drew back behind the Rappahannock. He still was there a few days later, and was re-organizing his army when he was suddenly informed that a Division of Confederates had managed to penetrate inside his lines and was threatening at Manassas, the great warehouses that supplied his army.

General Pope had no doubt it would be easy to destroy this isolated corps and, reversing his course, he endeavored to smother it in the mass of his troops. But, that Corps had Jackson as Chief. Jackson who, on Lee's order, was executing this adventurous foray. While Pope was dreaming of a capture, Jackson penetrated into the center of the colossal warehouse of Manassas where the richness of the North displayed itself in enormous masses of food, ammunitions, and camping material. Without lingering in the middle of so many goods that the soldiers needed so urgently, he set fire, unmercifully, to them; and, slipping away in a quick march, he came to join Lee.

While Pope, reversed again his course in the pursuit of the destructors of his provisions, the Confederate army assembled and marched against him. It is on the same battlefield where the South had won the first victory of Manassas (or Bull Run) that the Confederate Army joined the Northern Army. Pope's officers made up for the insufficiencies of their Chief, and their firmness made of

this second Battle of Manassas one of the most bloody and toughest of all the war. But, they did not manage to win over Lee's clever dispositions. Eight of them, and 30 thousand soldiers, remained on the battlefield.(1)

General Pope was obliged to retire under the walls of Washington, where he soon resigned from his command. In three months, General Lee had saved Richmond twice. Two armies, stronger than his, had been beaten or destroyed. His native land, Virginia, was liberated up to its frontiers; but the losses had been great and were not to be easily repaired. The victory at Manassas cost 9 thousand soldiers killed and four Generals wounded. If the ardor of the troops increased every day, it was not so for their number. Their equipment, which was pitiful, had not been renewed. Uniforms had become rags, shoes were lacking; and to replace them, soldiers were learning how to make wooden soles.(2) "One is ashamed to command men in such a state," said an officer during the first review after the battle. "I am never ashamed of them when they fight," Lee answered softly; but he knew better than anyone to what extent the North had hardly made a dent in its resources, when those of the South were near extinction. He asked for everyone's contribution, and tried to show his

---

(1) The Federals left also 7 thousand prisoners and 30 guns.

(2) During the Second World War, in France, most shoes had wooden soles also.



compatriots that the danger was only postponed; but it was so difficult to get people to understand the danger. In the eyes of the Southerners, his recent victories pledged for an impending and complete triumph. They persuaded themselves that the campaign was going to terminate by peace -- a glorious peace that would ensure their independence; and they found it irksome, as well as useless, to hear about new efforts.

It seemed that General Lee had given arguments against his foresight. When he spoke of armies that were training in the North, he was reminded how he had delivered Virginia from armies quite as powerful, and he had to work at destroying the confidence inspired by his own fame.

Besides, there were a few reasons for hoping for peace. It was then August, 1862. Six months before, France, England, and Spain had decided to unite their strength for a common expedition. The fatal Mexican War that France, for her misfortune, decided to pursue obstinately alone, had begun. It was in the interest of the allied powers to ensure a support on the American continent. That support could not be the government of Washington, which had always showed itself jealous of Europe's interference in the affairs of the new world, and considered Mexico as its heirloom. Would the new Confederation of Southern States be the ally that the three powers wanted? The question was debated in London, Paris, and Madrid; and also in Richmond. And



### LEE'S MEN

The faces of the veterans in this photograph of 1864 reflect more forcibly than volumes of historical essays, the privations and the courage of the ragged veterans in gray who faced Grant, with Lee as their leader. They did not know that their struggle had already become unavailing; that no amount of perseverance and devotion could make headway against the resources, determination, and discipline of the Northern armies, now that they had become concentrated and wielded by a master of men like Grant. But Grant was as yet little more than a name to the armies of the East. His successes had been won on Western fields—Donelson, Vicksburg, Chattanooga. It was not yet known that the Army of the Potomac under the new general-in-chief was to prove irresistible. So these faces reflect perfect confidence.



there, minds prompt to take fire, saw already Europe greeting the young republic, and for the price of a benevolent neutrality that would have paralyzed the United States' hostility, admitting it to the rank of a power.

Perhaps this was not an unreasonable hope. It was legitimate to count on England's traditional jealousy against the Union's strong marine; on France's obvious interest as the most engaged of the three in the new war. Finally, one knew that diplomates had let escape a few words; and those words of encouragement were repeated everywhere, exploited, and, perhaps, exaggerated.

It was an opinion shared by a majority of Southerners, that a great part of the population of the State of Maryland -- though apparently submitted to the government of Washington -- was, at heart, with them. They came to think that the appearance of their flag on Maryland's soil might generate an uprising. One would prove to Europe, by this offensive movement, the importance of the recent victories. One would make her realize that the North was, for the moment, incapable of defending its frontier; and if Maryland joined the Confederation, that new force would maybe tip the scales of the undecided European powers in favor of the South.

To believe what one desires is a disposition of mind that one meets in other places than America. Illusion is sweet and fatal. The government of Richmond decided the army should pass the Potomac and carry war into Federal territory. And

so, neglecting the wretched remains of Pope's army, Lee crossed the river without a fight and found himself in Maryland.

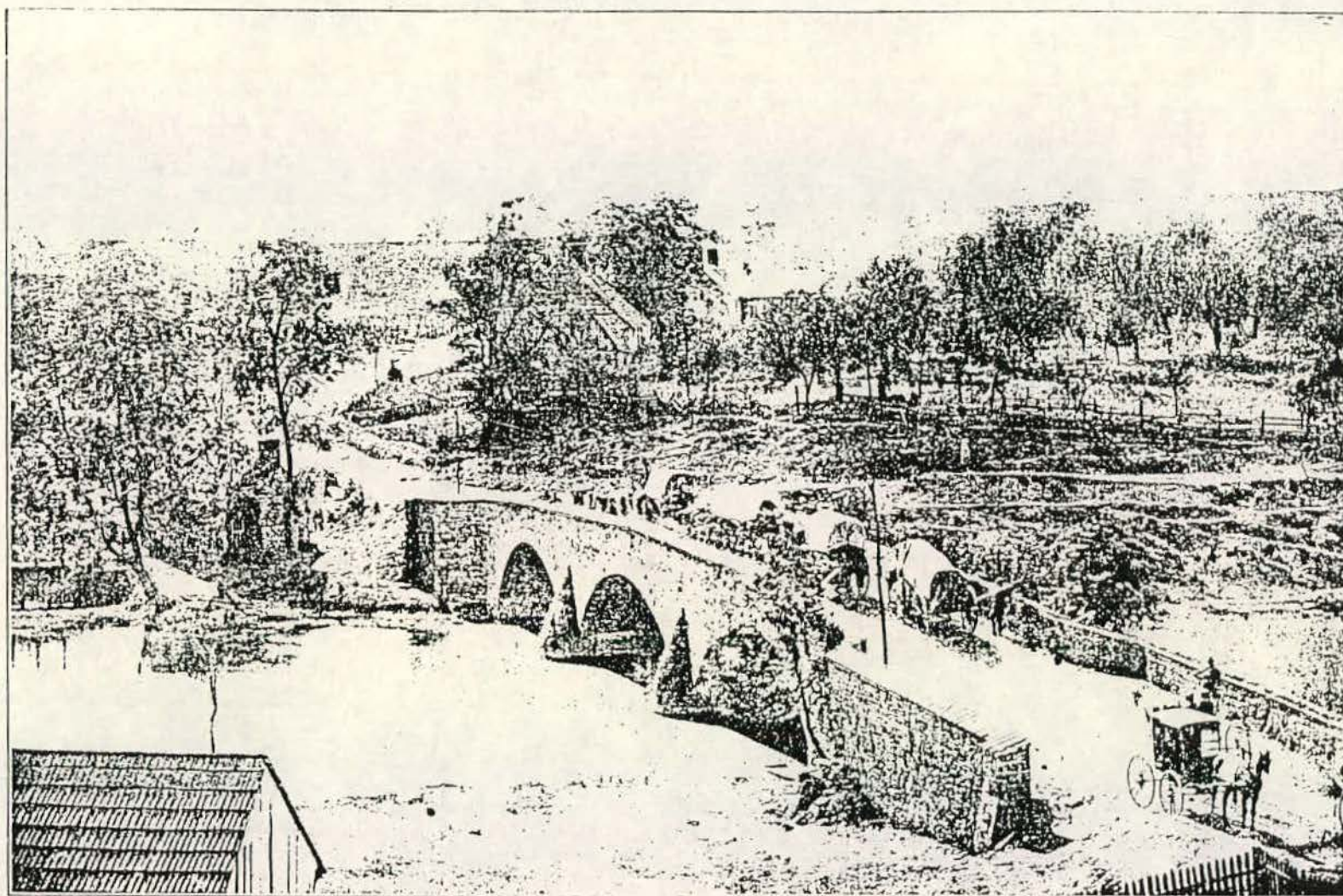
I do not know if the Southerners had realized that the aspect of their soldiers was more of a nature to cool enthusiasm than to excite it. Thousands of men, clad in rags and tatters, had on their feet but wooden soles. Even food was lacking. "The correspondent of a Northern Journal thus wrote of the appearance of these troops: 'I had heard much of the decayed appearance of the Rebel soldiers, but such a looking crowd! Ireland, in her worst straits, could present no parallel, and yet they glory in their shame!'"

However, the quick march of the Confederates created but little reaction in the population. A few enrollments took place, and that was all. In certain towns, the reception was even quite cold. It is reported that when the Southerners entered Hagerstown, an old exalted school mistress had the idea of leading her young flock on the road taken by the enemy soldiers. She wanted to make her pupils sing the national anthem of the North, "The Star-spangled Banner," and hoped, perhaps, to gain by this demonstration, the appearance of a martyr. General Lee was arriving on his horse when the old woman, standing straight in the middle of the road, started singing her provocative song. Lee calmly diverted his horse, and, raising his hat as he passed near her, he saluted her with his usual politeness. He gave orders not to speak to her



during the procession of the troops, and to let her return freely to her home.

Moreover, all the General's instructions bore, first of all, respect for the people who were for the Union; and such was the obedience of his troops that the most strict discipline reigned during the two weeks that the expedition lasted.



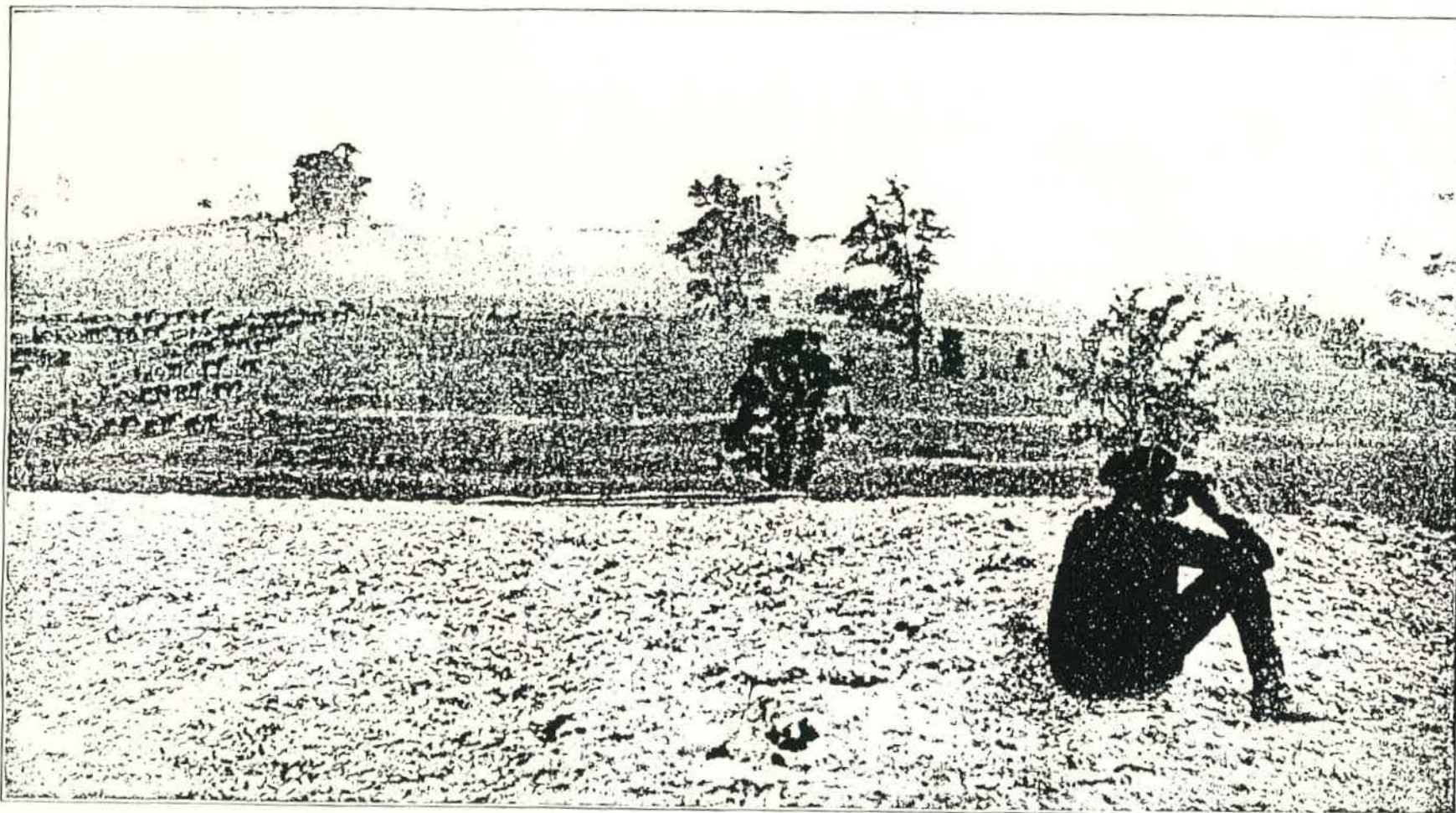
*Copyright by Review of Reviews Co.*

### THE PASSING WAGON TRAIN

This historic bridge crossed Antietam Creek on the turnpike leading from Boonsboro to Sharpsburg. It is one of the memorable spots in the history of the war. The photograph was taken soon after the battle of Antietam; the overturned stone wall and shattered fences, together with the appearance of the adjacent ground, are mute witnesses of

the conflict that raged about it on September 16-17, 1862, when the control of this bridge was important to both McClellan and Lee. The former held it during the battle; and the fire of his artillery from the ridges near the bridge enabled the disordered Union lines to recover in time to check the ferocious assaults of the Confederates.





Copyright by Patriot Pub. Co.

### THE BATTLE FOG AT ANTIETAM

The sulphur smoke of the guns, covering the field like a sea mist, tells us to-day as clearly as it told the photographer on September 17, 1862, that a battle is in progress off to the right. It was indeed the bloodiest single day's action of the war, and there probably exists no finer picture of an actual engagement than this remarkable photograph. At the moment of exposure the firing must have been terrific. Down in the meadow are seen the caissons of the artillery; the guns are engaged less than a quarter of a mile away.

The battle-field of Antietam was the first that remained in complete possession of the Union troops since the disasters that began to overtake them after Fair Oaks in June. On Antietam were staked the Confederate hopes for the conquest of Maryland. The battle proved, however, to be the turning-point in establishing the sovereignty of the Union. Lincoln had awaited a Union victory to justify a proclamation of emancipation. This he issued September 22, 1862, almost before the sound of the mighty battle had died away.



## CHAPTER TWELVE - ANTIETAM

Meantime, the Washington government, threatened by Lee's advance, had recognized its mistake and had reinstated McClellan as Commander in Chief of an army strongly rebuilt. While Lee marched all around Washington, without being able to attack the town, protected by recent fortifications; McClellan's army was marching towards Virginia, which was left without a defense. Lee saw the menace and understood it was necessary to move closer to the frontier. All hope for an uprising was to be abandoned. Nothing retained him any more. The return was an absolute must. He considered prudent to ensure the free crossing of the Potomac, by having Harpers Ferry, that commands the river, occupied in advance.

A strong garrison was defending the town. Jackson, the raid specialist, was given the mission to take her by surprise. He managed to hide from the enemy the first part of his march.

A small incident revealed the rest of Lee's plan. One of the Confederate Generals dropped from his pocket, in a house in Fredericksville, the written orders giving the directions each army was to take. The paper was picked up and immediately carried to McClellan. Being thus informed of all the plans of his adversary, McClellan immediately sent help to Harpers Ferry. One can easily understand Lee's astonishment at seeing his plan detected. His forces were depleted by the absence of Jackson's Corps. He decided to concentrate them in



the shelter of the hills bordering the Potomac. It turned out to be a wise measure, for, on September 14th, McClellan's army -- 87 thousand men strong -- attacked Lee's army, reduced by the absence of Jackson, to approximately 20 thousand men. During five hours of fighting, Lee maintained his position, thanks to his bravery. He had had an arm dislocated a short time before, and was travelling in a carriage during most of the previous campaign. But, the call of the guns put him back on his horse. The 15th, he resumed his retreat. His resistance at Boonsboro had given Jackson time to take Harpers Ferry, from which he brought 11,800 prisoners and 80 cannons.

The 16th, Jackson joined Lee and the two Generals got ready to sustain a massive attack. Effectively, on the morning of the 17th, the whole Federal Army fell on the Confederates -- 33 thousand men, including Johnson's Corps.

The quick march of the latter around Washington had sowed the roads with stragglers and cripples who, later on, would join the ranks, but were then missing. McClellan knew the numerical inferiority of his adversaries. He knew that the Potomac -- very large at that place -- was flowing behind them and barred them their retreat. At long last, he was presented with this bold occasion that so many Generals have never been able to grasp. This terrible fighter, who lately had pried Richmond from him -- who had inflicted on him severe successive defeats -- was in his power. He -- McClellan -- was going to hurl the Confederates into the river, and, thus,

avenge, with his personal failure, the affront that the Maryland campaign had inflicted on the Federal flag.

His troops felt, as he did, how favorable the circumstances were, and their ardor was extreme. The battle lasted 14 hours, with an incredible fierceness. For 14 hours, the Confederates bore the furious attack of an army three times more numerous without giving up an inch of land -- without any confusion taking place in their ranks. It seemed that the calm and serene courage of the Chief had penetrated the soldiers. The Potomac waters could flow behind them. They knew for sure that with Lee at their head, McClellan himself would not succeed in pushing them into it. But, the battle was bloody.

A big field of wheat, exposed on all sides to cannon fire, was taken, lost, re-taken, then re-lost four times. It remained covered with corpses. The tributary of the Potomac, the Antietam, ran near the battlefield. The possession of its broad bridge was coveted by both parties. Five times, Federals and Confederates pried it from one another. "Tell him," says McClellan to a messenger sent to Burnside, who had just taken the bridge, "if he cannot hold his ground, then the bridge to the last man. Always the bridge. If the bridge is lost, all is lost." The adversaries showed themselves worthy of one another.

As night was falling, General Lee met his youngest son, Robert, a child 16-years-old. He was black with powder and



seemed, to his father's observant eye, a little discouraged or tired. Starting his day with four cannons and a Company of artillery men, he was bringing back only one cannon -- the others having been dismantled; and seven men were the only survivors of his valiant troop. "How are you, Robert?" called the General? "Not too bad, father," answered the child, who seemed revived by the look on his father. "That's right, my son, go back to the fight and drive those Yankees back." Followed by his seven men, Robert went to set in position his last gun.

The following day opened up on a terrible carnage. Twenty-five thousand men were strewn across the battlefield, and both armies, equally exhausted, were remaining on their positions. McClellan was incapable of renewing an offensive; Lee was meditating a retreat. (1)

In the night of the 19th, he left the heights he had been able to keep until then. Slowly, safely, he crossed the river in the best order; and with all the spoils brought by Jackson, with his own equipment, and all his wounded, he found himself

---

(1) "The next morning, I found that our loss had been so great, and there was so much disorganization in some of the commands, that I did not consider it proper to renew the attack that day...McClellan's report."

again on Virginia land. (1)

One of the officers of his headquarters remembers a fact during the night of September 19th -- a quite simple fact, but it will help to characterize General Lee. After having crossed the Potomac, he had left, on the southern bank of the river, 25 to 30 guns with some infantry to guard them. Soldiers and guns were to prevent the Federals from crossing if they tried to follow his army. As for him, he had walked amongst his men. Toward morning, still suffering from his dislocated arm, he stretched out under an apple tree and fell asleep in his coat. His officers laid down around him. Nobody knew where to find the luggage. All were supperless, but a certain pride sustained everyone's morale. At least no trophy had remained in the hands of the Federals and one had the feeling of having done one's best. Silence had settled for hardly an hour, when the officer in charge of guarding the crossing of the river came at full speed, asked for the General, woke him up with a start, and told him that the enemy had taken the positions on the southern bank and had captured all the guns. "'All,' said the General. 'Yes, General, I fear, all.'" "This announcement lifted me(2) right off my blanket, and I moved away, fearful I might betray my feelings.

---

(1) The confederates had lost eight thousand men; the federals twelve thousand.

(2) Written by a witness of the scene.

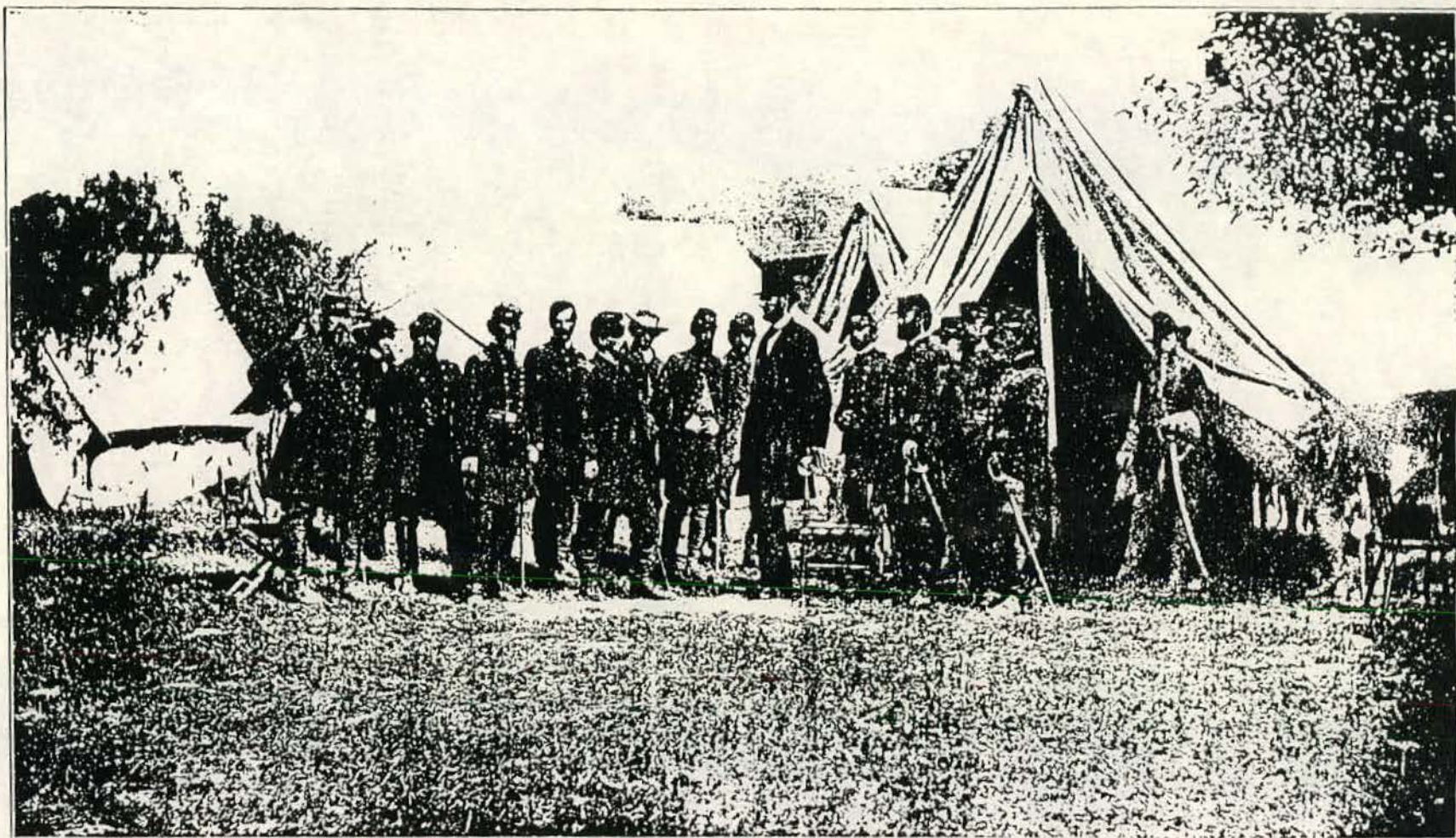


The General exhibited no temper, made no reproach that I could hear, either then, or even afterwards, when he learned that the gallantry of a subordinate officer had saved the batteries, and that the commanding officer had been premature in his report."

The Battle of Antietam gained for McClellan to be called, 'The Napoleon of America.' The emotion caused by Lee's expedition in Maryland had been so great that the joy for what seemed a deliverance was general and enthusiastic. However, after the first movement of relief, there spread a feeling of great disappointment that Lee and his army had safely returned to Virginia. For the South, the Confederate's retreat, in spite of the bad influence it could have on the negotiations with Europe, was not considered as a defeat. All in all, the spoils taken at Harpers Ferry more than compensated the losses endured.

General Lee was received, not as if he had been vanquished, but as the savior of the army. This beautiful defense -- one against three -- had enhanced him in the eyes of his native land. The joy of recovering him erased regrets. Always attentive, intrepid and calm, he was going to pursue the task of defense with patience in face of resistance -- perseverance against impossibilities such as belong only to those for whom it is as valuable to devote oneself as to succeed.





Copyright by Review of Reviews Co.

#### THE PRESIDENT INVESTIGATES

Lincoln at McClellan's Headquarters, October 1, 1862.—The serious, impassive features of the President give no hint of the thoughts that were coursing through his mind as his calm eyes gazed upon the General and his staff. He knew that "Little Mac," as the soldiers fondly termed him, was the idol of the army and had the staunch support of his officers. Lincoln also knew that he and McClellan differed radically as to the conduct of the war. Politics had crept into the Army of the Potomac, the politics which during the

campaign of 1861 opposed McClellan to Lincoln as a candidate for the presidency. As he stood there before the General's tent the Commander-in-chief could have summarily removed McClellan, but in accordance with his patient policy of leaving the future event to justify his course, Lincoln merely inspected the camp, talked with McClellan and his officers, and pondered all he saw and heard in an effort to find some military reason for the strange failure of the splendid army to end the war by a decisive campaign.



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN - FREDERICKSBURG;

### WINTER AT CAMP

For almost two months, the Confederate Army was able to camp in peace near the Potomac. It greatly needed a rest, and received, gradually, the reinforcement of the stragglers left behind on the roads of Maryland.

Richmond succeeded in providing boots. The army also received blankets -- unfortunately, too few of them. But men were getting rare -- only a few of them coming from the invaded states, and if General Lee's army increased in quality, it would not attain its original manpower.

In the North, McClellan was remaining immobile; and the government in Washington was blaming his inaction. Nobody knew as well as the young General to what degree his army had suffered from its victory, and to what extent the system under which it had been organized made it difficult to handle. It was decimated by illness, (1) and the lack of subordination among the Chiefs prevented the most necessary orders from being carried out in proper time.

While General Lee, with a single word, could send Stewart and eighteen hundred horsemen into Pennsylvania, where he was breaking up roads, telegraphs, and from which he returned with reliable information and a good number of horses, McClellan

---

(1) One hundred and thirty thousand ill soldiers were in the hospitals of the North.

could not obtain from the commanders of the force on the Potomac that they try to stop the bold partisan on his way back. (1)

Finally, either because of the impossibility of executing the orders he received, or from weariness, McClellan took so little account of the advice of his government that the latter decided, for the second time, to withdraw his command and entrust it to General Burnside.

Burnside had proved himself at the bridge of Antietam; but promoted to act, he felt obliged to act without delay and at whatever cost. He thus met one of the bloodiest defeats of this war -- already so bloody.

Fredericksburg, north of Richmond, on the Rappahannock, was considered one of Virginia's most important positions. The preceding year, the Federals had bombarded it, and it was thanks to Lee's successes that they had been obliged to give up the siege. To reappear in front of the place, snatch it away from the rebellion, turn it into his Winter quarters, so as to find himself in Spring near the probable scene of hostilities -- approximately twenty miles from Richmond, capital of the Confederation -- such was Burnside's ambition.

He made haste to complete his already considerable preparations, and started out. Thanks to his excellent

---

(1) During this brilliant reconnaissance, General Stewart covered 80 miles every 24 hours.



cavalry, General Lee was informed of the slightest movements of his adversary. Long before the Federalists might have been able to appear in front of the place, he had covered it with his army and was fortifying the heights that surrounded it. At that time, and including all the disseminated units, Lee could count, 45 thousand men under his orders. Burnside had almost 150 thousand; but he was coming too late, and all the advantage of exceptional positions was in the hands of Lee.

The Federalists soon discovered it. They tried to cross the Rappahannock under the fire of the Southerners, and lost so many men that they had to give up that plan. They decided then to bomb Fredericksburg from the riverbank they were holding.

Over the heads of the Confederate soldiers flew the deadly fire, sewing disaster in the poor town that was only beginning to rise from its ruins.

Soon, houses, churches, entire streets crumbled. The population -- even the feminine population -- showed great calm. They settled in the cellars. Besides, luckier than our compatriots of Strasbourg or Paris, the inhabitants of Fredericksburg were not besieged and had the resource, of which they took advantage, of taking refuge in the countryside and of settling in the woods.

The bombing bringing no result, and the Southerners remaining determined not to leave their high positions, Burnside decided to do better than McClellan, risked his army,

and attacked.

On December 13th, with five boat bridges, (1) he crossed the river and launched his divisions against the hills held by the confederates. Vigorously repulsed by Jackson, Burnside's regiments tried to make a break in another place; and, bad luck for them, were directed against Mary's Hill, the best defended position -- the one that had the strongest artillery. Made furious by the lack of success of his first attempts, General Burnside swore that he would take over Mary's Hill before the night.

Six times in a row, with a courage and a steadiness that the federal troops had never yet displayed to such an extent, the Northern columns were hurled in thick masses. But, six times decimated by the pelting shots, they had to retreat. However, General Burnside held fast to his rash oath.

"The simile so commonly used in descriptions of battles, of waves breaking upon a rock-bound coast, was never more just in its conception than in the frantic battle in which the federal divisions were shattered on the heights assailed and were thrown back, one after the other, on the crimson tide of death." (2)

The firing of all the batteries converged on the same part of Mary's Hill, and the trenches in which the Southerners

---

(1) The boat bridges were built on the 12th.

(2) Captain Pollard's description.



took shelter were covered with shells. General Lee was there in person. One of his future historians saw him in the middle of the projectiles raining down around him and put down in writing the impression he felt.

"It would be presumptuous in me to say one word in commendation of the serenity or, if I may so express it, the unconscious dignity of General Lee's courage when he is under fire. No one who sees and knows his demeanor in ordinary life would expect anything else from one so calm, so undemonstrative, and unassuming. But the description applied after the Battle of the Alma to Lord Raglan by Marshall Saint Arnaud, and in which, noticing Lord Raglan's unconsciousness under fire, he speaks of his 'antique heroism' seems to me so applicable to General Lee that I cannot forbear recalling it here...."(1)

Night came. One after another, the federal batteries ceased firing, and the crest of Mary's Hill was not carried. Burnside had no choice but to order a retreat. He was leaving 12 thousand corpses on the wooded hills so many times ascended and descended, and he found himself obliged to cross the Rappahannock again. For the fourth time, Virginia was liberated; and thanks to their positions, the confederates had lost only three thousand men.

The government of the Union very nearly paid a still

---

(1) McCabe's Life of Lee.

higher price for the failure at Fredericksburg. The outcries of McClellan's partisans rose to accuse Burnside of incapacity and to protest anew against the victor of Antietam's destitution. A political crisis was impending.

The people of the Northern states realized the sacrifices they were making. They were giving, with an unsurpassed generosity, all the gold and all the blood that was asked of them. Besides, they knew how limited were the resources of the South and could not understand how it resisted so long. Lincoln did not give in to the pressure of the public. He supported Burnside, and the people of the Union, in spite of their agitation, had the rare wisdom to maintain their confidence in their president.

The bonuses offered to the military enlistments were increased, a renewed activity was given to the plants making arms, to the powder mills, and the failure of the Northerners had no other consequence than new and greater efforts.

The Battle of Fredericksburg had been fought on the 13th of December. As soon as the enemy had disappeared, the confederates went into winter quarters.

The cold was particularly hard that year of 1863, and life for the troops, under their shelters made of planks, without blankets, without boots, meagerly nourished, was very painful to bear.

The Southern states formed a region of immense production that furnished raw material to the Northern states and to the



whole world. Between North and South there was, in peace time, a continuous exchange of services. The South sent north its cotton, wool, leathers; the North sent back fabrics, shoes, all the products of its industry. The war had broken that agreement and the Southern states, with their ports blockaded, with their lack of machines, without workmen, other than the Blacks who cultivated the land, had no way of utilizing the remains of their riches.

In vain, General Lee would claim for his soldiers the clothes, the boots, that sheer humanity would be compelled to give them. President Davis could not give him any supply of any sort. Lee asked for recruits, officers, artillery, horses; but far from being able to send him men to increase his army, the president reduced it by several regiments which were claimed with insistence by the population of the Atlantic Coast, threatened by an enemy landing.

So, not only did General Lee have to count on himself alone, but the winter during which the armies of the North were perfecting their armament and doubling their manpower, that same winter was bringing to him but an inevitable and considerable weakening.

He knew that danger was growing not far from him. He knew that wherever he was not -- in Kentucky, in Tennessee -- the Northern armies had gained ground. He foresaw the time when they could unite all their forces to overwhelm him. But it was not in his nature to neglect the present day while

contemplating the future. Whatever should happen in a future that did not belong to him, he did for his soldiers what he was able to do at that time. He perceived his responsibility towards all the human souls under his orders and succeeded in communicating to his army part of the feelings that inspired him.

What was his secret to attain such a result, one might ask? All the documents, books, newspapers, letters that we have perused agree on this point -- he was an example. He gave more and more of himself. He lived with his soldiers. He animated them with his spirit. He infected them with his ardor.

The military camp covered a plateau where a few stone houses remained. A big farm house was in the middle, which in any other army would have been the general's headquarters. In spite of the rigor of America's cold weather, Lee chose to dwell in a barrack hardly better built than those that lodged his soldiers. The stone houses were reserved for the sick. To them also were reserved the parcels of food or wine sent by friends of the general.

The Europeans, attracted by curiosity to the camp, were astonished by the complete absence of military signs of pomp which, in the old world, seem a necessary accompaniment of the war. The headquarters were in seven or eight barracks built up against a hedge, here and there a few unhitched box cars. No guards, no sentinels around. Nowhere that crowd of



military assistants, talking or loafing, ready to protect the general against any unwelcome visitor. A deep seated respect alone protected this man from bothersome callers -- this man whom the soldiers liked to call "Uncle Robert," and who seemed to have no greater pleasure than to mix with them and share with them words that strengthen and cannot be forgotten.

On the other hand, one never heard General Lee apply a violent or hateful comment to the fearful enemies he would have had the right to accuse of lacking generosity. His possessions had been confiscated and a sort of fierce persistence had presided over the destruction of the two homes he had loved. And yet, he never let any bitterness appear, and one noticed that when he spoke of his former comrades, who had remained in the federal army, it was with the same affection as of old.

It is not quite natural for the human heart to retain this moderation in the great and sometimes so smarting ordeals brought by life, but General Lee had received the lofty lessons of the gospels. His soldiers knew it, and their respect for him was all the greater. His faith was strong and simple and had had a profound influence on his life. He did not proclaim that he was a Christian, but one felt how deeply he was one. One knew that when the general uncovered his head and joined the camp prayers, it was not to comply with a tradition, but because, with all his heart, he prayed for the divine help in which he believed.

Came a moment during the winter when General Lee was doubly in need of this help. Private sorrows added themselves to the public pains. He lost, without being able to see her, a young and charming daughter. He had left her blooming and healthy. An illness caught at Richmond made her pine away and the doctors advised the softer climate of Carolina. She left, and her father, who was yet so near her, was not able to leave his army for one single day so as to kiss her good-bye. She left, and it was for her death.

In a letter to his eldest daughter, he writes:

"November 24th, 1862. The death of my dear Annie was, indeed, to me a bitter pain; but the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. In the quiet hours of the night, when there is nothing to lighten the full weight of my grief, I feel as if I should be overwhelmed. I have always counted, if God should spare me a few days after this Civil War was ended, that I should have her with me, but year after year my hopes go out and I must be resigned."



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE MUD MARCH - CHANCELLORSVILLE

We have described how the winter of 1862/1863 was spent in General Lee's camp, and we have omitted to relate an incident that brought some distraction to the monotonous waiting for spring. General Burnside, whom we have left crossing to the north bank of the Rappahannock, could not swallow his defeat. He was constantly planning a new attack on Fredericksburg's positions, and it seemed that the bloody experience he had found of their strength was not sufficient. On January 19th, making the best of an apparently fine weather turn, he lead his army to the same point of the Rappahannock where he had, the first time, crossed the river. His divisions were moving along when, during the night of the 20th, a terrible storm hit the region and a deluge of rain transformed into lakes the deep valleys that groove that part of the country. The flood soaked the land to such an extent that the soldiers sank into it and had to be helped out. And yet, the federals had to transport the pontoons necessary for crossing the river. In vain, triple teams of mules and horses were harnessed to the pontoons. In vain, 150 men pulled each boat. The wheels, sunken into the mud, could no longer turn. The army spent the whole day in the same place, incapable of pursuing its course. The following day saw a steady downpour of rain; and the situation, already bad, became desperate. An indescribable chaos of artillery vehicles encumbered the

flooded roads where the pontoons, immobilized on their chariots, looked like islands emerging from a new Noah's flood. A great number of horses and mules died, buried in the liquid muck. The three-day's rations carried by the men were exhausted and it was impossible for a supply convoy to run the risk of bringing new supplies. Once again, retreat was compulsory. That retreat was not easy. As McClellan had done previously, the road was corduroyed, and carts and pontoons were pushed across by hand.

From their positions on the hills, the confederates witnessed the confusion of the enemy. Trying to pursue it would be sharing its plight.

General Burnside's attempt is known under the name of 'The Mud March,' and gives a good example of the difficulties and dangers of a winter campaign in Virginia.

The poor General, discouraged, and turned sour against his lieutenants by his failure, which he blamed partly on them, asked the President either their replacement or his revocation. He obtained his recall, and General Hooker(1) -- fighting Joe Hooker, as he was popularly called -- was appointed to be his successor. It was the fourth change in the command of the army of the North since Lee commanded the army of the South.

---

(1) Hooker, who is a wonderful soldier.... (Prince de Joinville)



The rest of the winter was peaceful; but when the awakening of spring made the roads practicable, Lee's army's perilous situation became visible to all eyes. We have already said that he had not received any re-enforcement. Far from that, in February, one of his best lieutenants, General Longstreet, had been called south of Richmond to defend the line along the James River and was too necessary there for his chief to believe he had the right to reclaim him. Meantime, the North had redoubled its efforts. One hundred and fifty thousand men were under Hooker's orders and were preparing to surround the little Southern army. (1)

There are, west of Fredericksburg, vast moors, (2) dry and desolate, with high underbrush; and in a few fertile places, pine trees and thorny undergrowth. That part of the country is called the wilderness. Effectively, no dwelling can be found there and solitude will apparently never be disturbed. On the border of that wilderness, going down towards Fredericksburg, one comes upon a single group of poor houses, which doesn't deserve the name of Chancellorsville, and then, all the way to Fredericksburg, an immense plateau free of obstacles and well suited for the movement of numerous troops.

It is on this plateau that General Hooker decided to fight and put an end, with one strike, to a war that had

---

(1) It numbered 45 thousand men.

(2) Emily Mason speaks of marshy grounds.

lasted too long. Ordering General Sedgewick, with 30 thousand men -- a force approximately equivalent to that which Lee could muster -- to renew the frontal attack when the proper time would have come, on the famous position in front of which Burnside had failed, General Hooker went, with his main forces, up the Rappahannock. He crossed it far enough up so that Lee, forced to protect the vicinity of Fredericksburg, could not follow him and prevent his crossing, then marched down on the right bank of the river and took position in front of Chancellorsville.

This wasn't all. Hooker had organized a corps of 12 thousand horsemen and, launching it between Fredericksburg and Richmond, had given it the mission to destroy the railways, the roads, the telegraph systems, to isolate Lee's army, and to prevent, by all means, Longstreet from coming to the help of his chief. As one can see, Hooker's plan was the kind any General could be proud of, and he did not hide his confidence and was announcing victory.

General Lee, with a small number of his men, was, in the eyes of his powerful adversary, a poor fly in the middle of a spider's web; and it was not only one, but three enemies who were to converge on him.

On May 2nd, all dispositions having been taken: Sedgewick in front of Fredericksburg, the twelve thousand horsemen awaiting the signal, Hooker concentrating his forces in front of Chancellorsville, one of his officers fell upon a



small group of Georgians on the border of the wilderness and made them prisoners. How was it possible that a Southern detachment should be so close to his encampments? Such was the question Hooker asked himself. Astonished, then reassured by his natural presumption, he concluded that the Georgian detachment was prudently retiring before the attack and the general felt his confidence increase. (1)

That same 2nd of May, at 5:00 p.m., in the very middle of the Northerners who were boiling water for their tea, Jackson struck suddenly -- like lightening -- in an instant, before the federal guns, still in marching order, could be put in firing position. He destroyed two divisions, the frightened remnants of which spread terror in all the sections of the army.

One can guess what had taken place. Lee, conscious of the various dangers that threatened him, had preferred fighting Hooker before his junction with Sedgewick. Hidden by the thickets of the wilderness, the swift Jackson, sent in front, had been able to take the federals by surprise. The Georgians made prisoners in the morning belonged to his rear guard. None of them had given away the secret of their chief. Jackson, therefore, had arrived right away in the center of the federal's encampments. But, the first effects of surprise

---

(1) "We know the enemy is fleeing, trying to save its material." (Diary of Hooker.)

were soon corrected and the enemy took the time to realize that it was not dealing with a whole army. (1)

The Southern Chief, on horseback, kept his men well grouped and was urging new battalions to arrive. "Press forward, press forward," he was incessantly repeating, and his arm was stretched towards the enemy or was raised to the sky as if imploring victory. Meantime, night was falling. The federal guns, at last in position, covered the Southerners with shells and mowed down trees and men. The sinister flashing of exploding shells at short intervals, lighted the obscurity and enabled the officers to recognize their troops.

Thick underbrush and fallen trees had obliged the Confederates to break up their lines. It was around 10 o'clock when Jackson drove his horse ahead to judge the progress of the action. Giving orders on the way, he advanced quite far ahead. As he was returning, a group of his own soldiers, that he had himself put at this point an hour before -- to which he himself had given instructions -- mistook his staff for a group of enemy riders and fired. Jackson was hit

---

(1) Panic began in the army of General Seigel that included four thousand, five hundred German soldiers. The confused mass of frightened men, in spite of the efforts of its chiefs, came crushing against the army of General A. Von Stemmehrer (Lossing, History of the War, Volume 3, Page 29.)



by three bullets. Few of his officers survived that fatal volley of shots. Two of them, however, managed to carry their chief and bring him back. "Who is this?" the Southern soldiers asked in the dark. "Only a confederate officer," Jackson would answer, with great effort. Heroic feint of a dying puritan. (1)

As Jackson had planned, the fighting was not interrupted. In the middle of the night, the guns were still blasting. On May 3rd, the battle resumed intensity. The confederates had learned that Jackson was wounded -- lost for them -- and in their fury, doubled their energy. With the shout, "Remember Jackson!" they threw themselves fiercely onto the cannons and lost a great many men. Ammunition gave out, and they were reduced to using their bayonets.

At that moment, not far away, sharp gun fire exploded. General Lee was coming to their rescue and cut his way through the enemy masses that were already encircling them.

Together, Jackson's corps and Lee's army conquered four times and lost four times the defenses of Chancellorsville. Finally, Hooker was obliged to give in and recalled his troops.

The scene became horrible. The pine woods, set on fire by the exploding shells, were full of wounded who, at the

---

(1) One of the two was killed a few days after, still carrying Jackson, but by the enemy.

sight of the roaring flames, shrieked with despair. The fire did not stop the hand-to-hand fights between men intent on destroying one another. The miserable houses of Chancellorsville were also burning, and the fire, again in the underbrush of the wilderness, extended far away, like one of those gigantic blazes by which the Indians deforest whole regions.

At that terrible time -- which, however, marked the beginning of the enemy's retreat -- bad news reached Lee. He had had to withdraw troops from his remarkable positions near Fredericksburg -- on Mary's Hill which had been so fatal to Burnside -- so as to fly to the help of Jackson, and Sedgewick's army had just taken them. That army was advancing to join Hooker, and Lee's army would be between two lines of fire.

Circumstances were serious. They were not above the genius and spirit of the general. Entrusting Jackson's corps -- much reduced by then -- to give Hooker the illusion of an army, he made haste towards Sedgewick's federals who, victorious, were coming to his encounter.

He joins them on the 4th at Salem Church, overwhelms them in one single raging attack, and throws them back onto the other bank of the Rappahannock. The enemy hardly manages to keep the prisoners it had made the previous day. Rid of Sedgewick, Lee changes front suddenly, and returning with haste to Chancellorsville, manages to consolidate the remains



of Jackson's troops before Hooker has the slightest inkling of his movements.

During the night of the 5th to 6th of May, it was Hooker's turn to cross the Rappahannock. Forced to a prompt retreat, he was able to take only one gun; and desperate, abandoned the land of the confederation. Once more, Virginia was delivered. Her safety had been costly.

If 25 thousand federals were strewn all over Chancellorsville's burned land, the small Virginian army had lost twelve thousand men, killed or wounded -- among whom, Stonewall Jackson. "Any victory would be dear at such a price," wrote General Lee.

General Jackson had been the hero of the South's first victory. Perhaps the most popular of its generals. He had known how to obtain such an obedience from the troops that the strangest order -- and the most dangerous -- coming from him would be enthusiastically executed. The habit of quick marches, to which he owed his greatest successes, had given his soldiers such a swiftness that they were nicknamed 'Jackson's pedestrian cavalry'. With him, General Lee lost his right arm, the confidant of all his thoughts, and remained alone to bear the burden -- every day heavier -- of commanding.

Two years after, when the war was finished, the Union, so often beaten by Jackson, but proud of his exploits, glorified itself in considering him as one of its children. He,

effectively, was one.

Only to America does this type seem to belong -- strange to our eyes -- a mixture of the exalted puritan and of the great man of war. Simple, resolute, ardent at praying, ardent at fighting, tender with the soldier, Jackson had seen, in the terrible crisis that was tearing apart the Union, only the peril of his native country -- the old Virginia. He died in the peace of faith. The last words pronounced in his delirium were, "Let us cross the river and rest in the shade of the trees." Rest was his due. To his chief remained the labor -- always heavier -- of defense.





National Archives, Brady Collection

Mathew Brady's war photographers came to Charleston along with the Union forces after the city had been evacuated by the Confederates in February 1865, and this is one scene that greeted them. A northern newspaper correspondent painted his view in words:

A city of ruins, of desolation, of vacant houses, of widowed women, of rotting wharves, of deserted warehouses, of weed-wild gardens, of miles of grass-grown streets, of acres of pitiful and voiceful barrenness—that is Charleston, wherein Rebellion loftily reared its head five years ago.

—Sidney Andrews, *The South Since the War*

Looking south on Meeting Street toward Saint Michael's Church and the ruins of the Circular Congregational Church, both sides of the street have been almost leveled from the fire of 1861 and the bombardment.





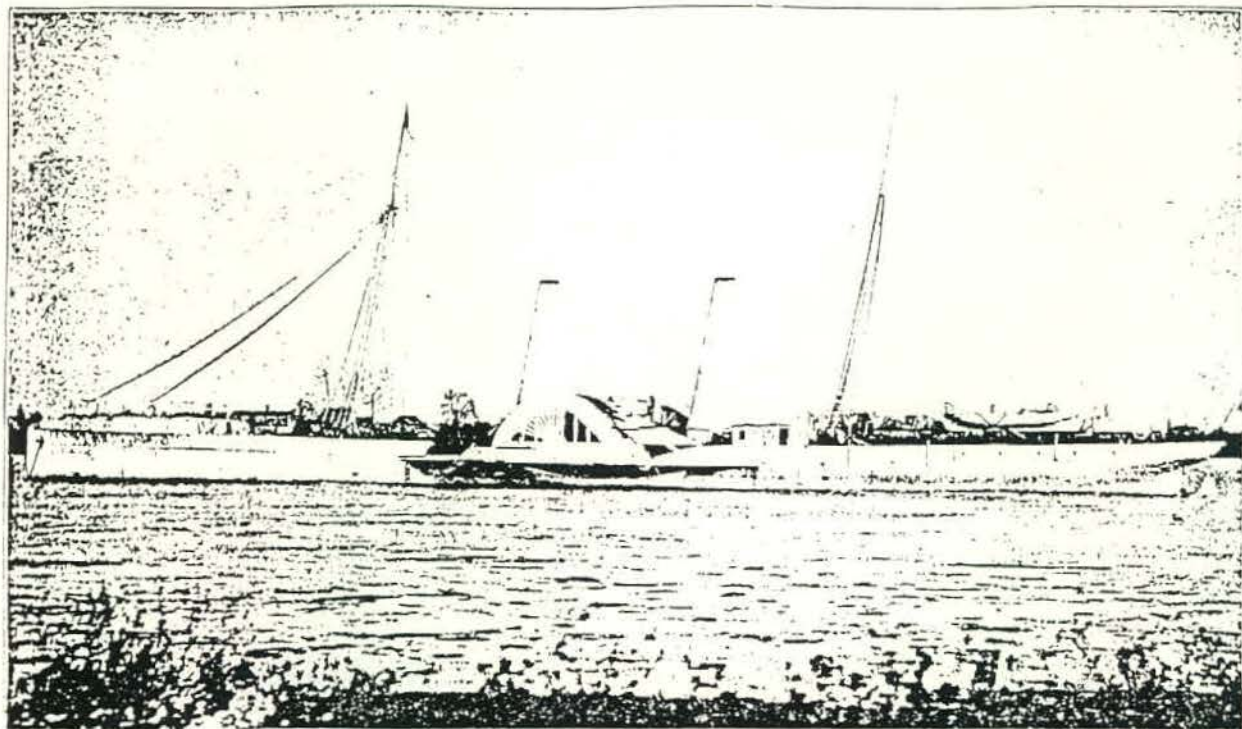
*Copyright by Review of Reviews Co.*

### SUMTER BECOMES A FEDERAL TARGET

The eastern barracks inside Fort Sumter during the Bombardment of Sept. 8, 1863.—The guns of the Federal blockading fleet had now been pounding the fort for many weeks. This but recently re-discovered picture is the work of G. S. Cook, the Charleston photographer. The view is to the right of the exploding shell in the picture on page 100. The flag and guns shown in the earlier picture have been swept away. The upper casemate to the left has been demolished. The lower ones remained intact, however, and continued to be used and even armed to the end of the Confederate's defense. The guns here bore on the channel nearly opposite Fort Moultrie. The bake oven of the barracks—on the chimney of which are a couple of Confederate soldiers—was frequently used for heating solid shot. In one of the lower rooms of the barracks, seen to the right, the ruins later fell upon a detachment of sleeping soldiers.

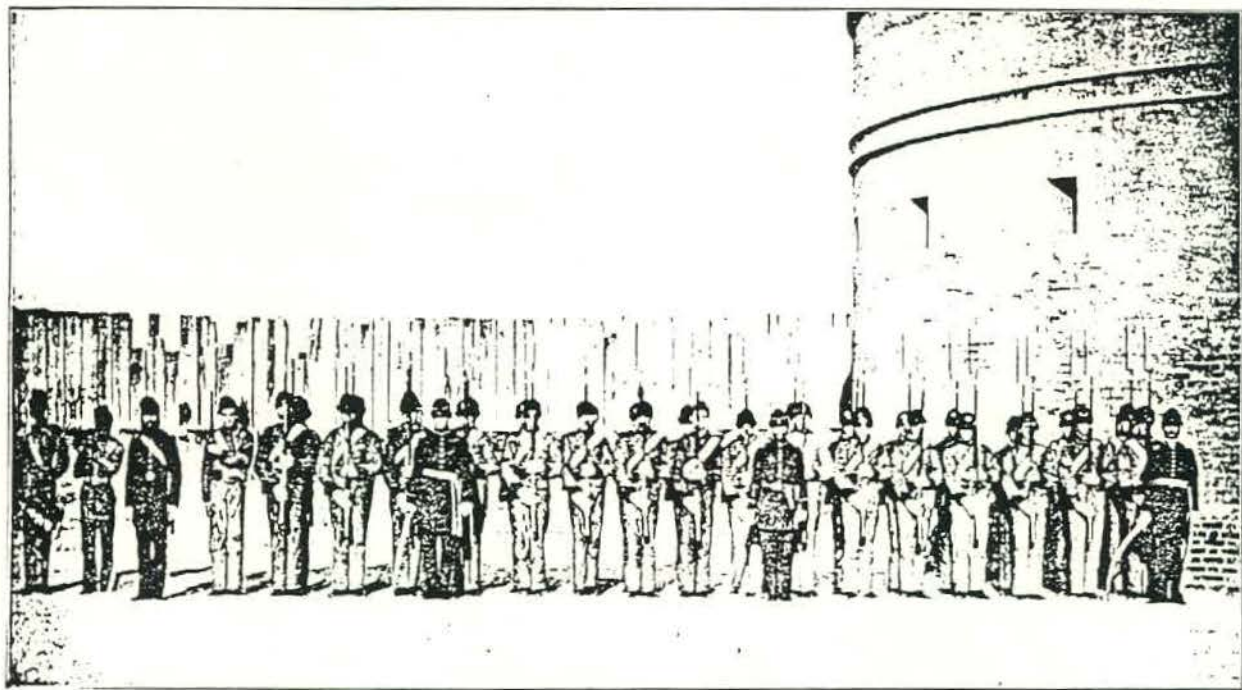
[A-7]





A BLOCKADE RUNNER, THE SWIFTEST CRAFT OF HER DAY

With the regularity of express trains, swift vessels like this one left Nassau and Bermuda and traveled direct for their destination, timed to arrive in the night. So great were the profits of blockade running that in some cases one successful voyage out and back would more than repay the owners for the loss of the vessel. Under these circumstances it can be easily seen that men were tempted to take risks that ordinarily they would avoid.



A CHARLESTON VOLUNTEER COMPANY AT DRILL UNDER THE WALLS OF CASTLE PINCKNEY

In pipe-clayed cross belts and white gloves, with all their accoutrements bright and shining, here we see a volunteer company of young Confederates standing at "Present Arms" and posing before the camera. The four officers standing in front of the line are Captain C. E. Chichester, Lieutenant E. John White, Lieutenant B. M. Walpole and Lieutenant R. C. Gilchrist. Gilchrist is curving his Damascus scimitar—a blade so finely tempered that its point would bend back to form a complete loop.





## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### BETWEEN TWO BATTLES

The double defeat of General Hooker produced a deep emotion in the two fractions of the country. In the South, it was an enthusiastic joy that the serious events in the west were insufficient to calm down, (1) and that the country showed in consecrating a whole day of thanksgiving to God. (2)

In the North, the alarm was taken seriously. In Washington, people were not far from seeing Hooker pursued by the fearsome confederates whose small numbers they would not believe in. However, they displayed no disorder nor weakness unworthy of a great people.

Ardor was, on the contrary, increasing and getting more noble. Already, on May 8th, Lincoln announced a law on conscription -- a law that had always been postponed. The following days, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, et cetera, created their militia while Hooker was receiving, in abundance, men, horses, munitions, cannons, to repair the gaps made in his army.

In the South, General Lee, after having paid his last respects to Jackson, took advantage of a few moments of calm

---

(1) The investing of Vicksburg, the last fort on the Mississippi that was still in the hands of the confederates.

(2) Jackson died a few days after.

given by his victory, to confer with his government on the general situation of The Confederation.

From all sides, except in front of him, where his vigorous effort had just broken it, an iron circle was tightening around the confederate states. Arkansas, and almost all of Tennessee, were in the hands of the North. On the Mississippi, Vicksburg, the last fort that could prevent free circulation on the big river, was completely surrounded and would necessarily fall if not assisted. Should one try to liberate it? Should one, rather, pursue the advantage already gained? Carry again the war into enemy territory, and oblige the Northern generals to cease threatening Richmond so as to protect their own capital? Such were the questions that General Lee submitted to President Davis, head of the Confederate government.

Two important reasons tipped the scales in favor of the last plan. One, entirely political, was the same that had sent Lee's army into Maryland -- the desire -- the hope -- that by proving its power, by confirming its victories, the confederation would finally be recognized by the principle European states. The other, purely practical, was the awful shortage of food rampant in the South. A simple incursion into the vast wheat fields of Pennsylvania, were it only to bring back food, would be, it was thought, equivalent to a new victory.

Did General Lee accept, without mental reservations, the



decision of his government? His delicacy, which always prevented him from anything that could look like a complaint, has prevented his biographers from discovering the truth.

More fortunate, we have been able to dig into his family notes and souvenirs. The result of our perusals is that General Lee considered his army better conceived for defense than for attack. He, himself, had little taste for the role of aggressor. It must be remembered that, in spite of their victories, General Lee's troops were much more a militia of citizens than an army of regular soldiers, such as we have them in Europe. For the defense of their land, they had risen. For the defense of their land, they were ready to die. But, for them to display their full value, they needed their native land under their feet -- the surroundings of their mountains, the feeling that their homes were threatened. Outside of their frontiers, they felt out of their element.

These considerations were submitted to President Davis, but he maintained his decision. General Lee obtained, in view of his march forward, that Longstreet's corps would be put under his orders, and with this help -- that raised his forces to fifty thousand men -- he made his way towards Harpers Ferry, where he intended to cross the Potomac.

All his cavalry, under the order of General Stewart, was sent ahead. They were to occupy the principle mountain passes. Before crossing the frontier, General Lee issued to his troops the following order of the day:

"Headquarters army, northern Virginia, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, June 27, 1863. General Order number 73:

"The commanding general has observed, with marked satisfaction, the conduct of the troops on the march and confidently anticipates results commensurate with the high spirit they have manifested. No troops could have displayed greater fortitude or better performed the arduous marches of the past ten days. Their conduct in other respects has, with few exceptions, been in keeping with their character as soldiers and entitles them to approbation and praise.

"There have been, however, instances of forgetfulness on the part of some, that they have in keeping the yet unsullied reputation of the army, and that the duties exacted of us by civilization and Christianity are not less obligatory in the country of the enemy than in our own. The commanding general considers that no greater disgrace could befall the army, and through it our whole people, than the perpetration of the barbarous outrages upon the innocent and defenseless, and the wanton destruction of private property that has marked the course of the enemy in our own country.

"Such proceedings not only disgrace the perpetrators and all connected with them, but are subversive of the discipline and efficiency of the army, and destructive of the ends of our present movements.

"It must be remembered that we make war only upon armed men and that we cannot take vengeance for the wrongs our



people have suffered without lowering ourselves in the eyes of all whose abhorrence has been excited by the atrocities of our enemy and offending against Him to whom vengeance belongeth -- without whose favor and support our efforts must all prove in vain."

"The commanding general, therefore, earnestly exhorts the troops to abstain, with most scrupulous care, from unnecessary or wanton injury to private property; and he enjoins upon all officers to arrest and bring to summary punishment all who shall, in any way, offend against the orders on this subject.

R. E. Lee, General"

Perhaps one sees in this order but good advice expressed nobly. If so, it would be an unfair judgement. It really was a courageous protestation, not only against the adversaries excesses, but also against the spirit of retaliation that threatened to draw the South into a fatal course. Imagine the sufferings of a civil war lasting three years: The increasing fierceness of each side; the burning rancor; the crimes; the vows of vengeance. During the American fight, in the North as well as in the South, the whole population, women, children, old folk -- and this will be to their everlasting honor -- were only one with the army of their land. They lived in their hearts with it, worked for it alone, were enthusiastic over its triumphs, and in the times of hardship, restored its spirit by their fervor. Without this deep union between the people and their soldiers, in a common aim, the length of the

American conflict would be impossible to explain.

But, the most beautiful roses have their thorns. Enthusiasm can lead to exaltation; and the patriotism of the South had reached injustice. A Southern woman recently recalled in front of us her souvenirs. She had come to the frontier of Virginia to give a last farewell to the officers of her family. She had seen the departure of the troops. She repeated to us the ungodly recommendations that some women dared give without scruples -- avenge us. "Treat them as they treated us. Remember!" Such were the advises of the last hour.

"And you, yourself," she was asked, "what were you doing?" "At first, I acted as the others did," she confessed. "I preached vengeance. I had been twice prisoner of the Yankees -- insulted, robbed by them. It seemed to me to be in my right. But --" "But what?" "But I heard General Lee rebuke a young man who had spoken of fair retaliation. He said in a few words what war should be nowadays. He compared it to the clear and frank cut delivered by a loyal sword. It is a harm, no doubt, but a harm that heals; whereas the hateful war is like a wound given by a poisoned arm. It does not forgive, and one does not forgive it either. This struck me, and I beseeched my brother, who had also heard



these words, to remember them." (1)

- 
- (1) Colonel Freemantle gives this testimony to the faithful manner in which these orders were carried out in his account of the march. "I saw no straggling into the houses, nor were any of the inhabitants disturbed or annoyed by the soldiers. I went into Chambersburg again and witnessed the singular good behavior of the troops towards the citizens."



COPYRIGHT, 1911, PATENT OFFICE

WHERE A SHELL DROPPED

you see those colors? Take them!" And the First Minnesota, in five minutes, captured the colors and stemmed the advance. Of the 202 officers and men who obeyed that order, half a hundred lay dead on the field and 174 others were wounded. The regiment's total mortality from that charge was 75, more than 82 per cent. of the number engaged—the highest known short of an Indian massacre. The Federals lost at Gettysburg 3,063 killed, 14,492 wounded, and 5,435 missing (Fox's figures). The Confederate loss was 3,903 killed, 18,735 wounded, and 5,425 missing (Livermore's figures). Total loss on both sides, 51,053.



COPYRIGHT, 1911, PATENT OFFICE

NEAR THE BLOODY ANGLE



CHAPTER SIXTEENGETTYSBURG

General Stewart had launched his campaign several days ago, but no news about his march had arrived yet at headquarters. Lee no longer recognized the usual speed of his lieutenant. He was beginning to worry about his fate.

The difficulty of scouting without cavalry was being felt increasingly by the marching army. So, wanting to give Stewart time to arrive before a general attack, he immediately gave up encountering the enemy; and passing behind Harpers Ferry without attacking it, he crossed the Potomac much higher, at Williamsburg. On his way, he took the town of Winchester, occupied by seven thousand Federals. Up until then, the secret of his movement had been well kept. But, a few run-aways from Winchester informed the Northern army of the advance of the Southerners, and thus revealed their plan.

On all the frontier of Pennsylvania, the people rose magnificently as one man. All the goods were carried to the north or destroyed. Any object that might have been of some use for the Southerners disappeared from under their feet. Bridges were blown up, roads were cut up, and thousands of improvised soldiers got ready to help the regular militia.

At the same time, Hooker was called to help and his army was rushing to the rescue. General Lee was advancing, but he still was ignorant of the fate of the cavalry, which he was lacking.

Once on enemy territory, information became still more difficult to obtain. And yet, one had to advance for fear of letting the patriotic fervor of the Northerners achieve its concentration. Day after day, Lee awaited vainly, with a controlled but poignant anxiety, a message from Stewart. His worried officers described themselves as "hungry for cavalry" and cursed the delay that paralyzed them. They often spoke of their grievances in front of the general, but never managed to induce him to express a blame of his officer whose undue absence threatened to cost so much.

Later, one learned that Stewart had given in to the temptation of beating an enemy corps not far from his route. He found himself faced by considerable forces and was repelled.(1) This failure obliged him to make a long and dangerous detour around the federal army, and he rejoined General Lee only during the battle which we are going to describe.

Finally, on July 1st, General Lee guessed more than he perceived, the approach of the enemy. At Gettysburg -- a small town, hub of several important roads -- the federal army had settled on a triangular plateau and was waiting for him. General Hooker, impressed by the gravity of the situation and fearing that the memory of his recent defeat at

---

(1) The second son of the general, Fitzhugh Lee, was wounded in that fight and was made prisoner.



Chancellorsville might have shattered the confidence of the troops under his command, had resigned a few days before and General Meade had taken his place.

On the morning of July 1st, the two armies were face to face. One could see from their attitude -- one could sense, almost, in the air, that the fight would borrow a special solemnity from the importance of the interests at stake.

With the enemy in the very heart of its territory, the North was perhaps faced with its greatest battle. Ventured so far from its frontier, threatened by crushing forces, perhaps the South had marched towards a final disaster.

Five hours of indecisive fighting, and in the evening a slight movement of retreat of the federals. Such was the result of the first day. Night -- a short summer night -- passed, and the morning of July 2nd found the two armies in their positions of the day before.

The army of the North was fortifying its triangle on the crests. The army of the South, extended along a long line, was facing it; but, not having been able to chose its terrain nor take the hills, for lack of cavalry, it was in an unfavorable position.

The morning went by. Noon arrived. Then came the hot hours of the day, and the two armies remained motionless. Meade did not want to lose the benefit of his position by descending to meet the Southerners. Lee was wondering if it would be reasonable to attack such defenses.

At five in the evening, a tremendous burst of artillery fire from the South proclaimed the decision taken by its Chief. To give battle seemed to him less dangerous than to withdraw, with all one's equipment, across a hostile country, without having at least disorganized the strength of the enemy by a fight.

The whole evening, the roar of artillery shook the earth. Brigades against brigades, men from the North against men from the South fought without weakening; and when the night returned, nothing was changed in the position of both armies.

Thousands, and again thousands of wounded and dead covered the fields; and it seemed that neither one of the two parties was nearer victory. With a relentlessness of which there are but few examples, the fight resumed on July 3rd at daybreak.

We will skip, as fast as possible, the phases -- painfully similar -- of these military slaughters; (1) and yet, we must give a thought to one of the last episodes of this battle of three days.

Around eleven o'clock, while the two armies had been fighting since the morning, silence -- more impressive than the noise of combat -- suddenly swept over. One guesses that

---

(1) On the evening of the 2nd, the losses of the federals were already twenty thousand men. The confederates had lost twelve thousand.



a great event is forthcoming. Effectively, Lee has assembled 145 cannons to fire, all together, on the center of the federal army; and while the destructive plan is being accomplished, the 'Champions of the South' will attempt a supreme effort.

Suddenly, the most terrible and heavy gun fire breaks the silence. At first, one thinks of nothing else -- one sees only the white clouds of smoke that hover above the guns. Soon, one sees an entire corps of Lee's best men -- his old experienced companions -- advancing at the charge.

They had almost a mile to cross under enemy fire before reaching the federals' positions. Without hesitation they advance "between the gates of death" -- to use the expression of an historian. They follow the bloody trail made by the artillery. They reach the hills. They climb. The hailing of bullets wipe out full rows of them. They still climb up. At last, here are the federal guns. With their bayonets, they capture them. Is victory theirs? But, a mass of Northerners invades the plateau. They arrive by deep waves and their irresistible weight threatens to crush the confederates against the red hot guns that they have just conquered.

Lee's veterans hold on. They, also, expect receiving help. But no, the young soldiers sent to their rescue become flustered. The ordeal is too strong. They disband before reaching the federal lines where the heroic Virginians are slaughtered. The fatal charge of Pickett's division is famous

in America like, for us, that of Napoleon's guard at Waterloo -- that of the cavalry men at Reischoffen. It is good that all devotions, particularly those to whom success has been refused, receive, at least, admiration; and it is a pious duty to preserve a heart-felt recollection of those whose valiant sacrifice has not conquered victory.



CHAPTER SEVENTEENTHE RETREAT

An equal lassitude seemed, on the evening of July 3rd, to have taken hold of both armies. Though he had decided to retreat, Lee remained at his position during all the day of the 4th. He still was ready to fight, but at the same time, he prepared his departure. Being so far from the frontier represented a serious danger. He, himself, surveyed all necessary dispositions with a serenity mingled with a kind of tender gaiety that was so typical of him. Constantly among the troops during action, he had not ceased to encourage them.

"It will come to an end in spite of everything," he would say. "We'll talk about it afterwards, but in the meantime, all good men must rally." He advised soldiers, slightly wounded, to bind up their hurts, but without losing hold of their gun. "This is the time when loyal and brave men must show what they are capable of doing," he would say. And the wounded remained in the ranks; and the dying would raise themselves to acclaim him.

His mind remained free. Encountering Colonel Freemantle, an English officer who was following the army, as a private observer, he warned him to steer clear of the dangerous place he was in. "This has been a sad day for us, Colonel," he added. "A sad day. But, we cannot expect, always, to gain victories." An officer was using his crop on his rearing horse, frightened by an exploding shell. "Don't whip him,

captain, don't whip him. I've got just a foolish horse myself, and whipping does no good."

Poor General Wilcox, who had not been able to bring his division to the help of Pickett, came up to him, blaming himself, and moaning for the great loss he had sustained. "Keep your chin up, general." And while he was speaking, he gave him a warm handshake. "This is my fault. It is I, not you, who has lost this battle. Just help me to get out of the mess the best you can." This is how, shouldering all the weight of responsibility on the day of misfortune, Lee revived his troops and elevated their hearts to the level of his own. Thus, nothing looked less like a route than the retreat of his army.

During the whole night of the 4th, the general remained on horseback at the junction of two roads, indicating himself the direction to take to each one of his army corps. No irritation, no disappointment, were traceable in his voice. His expression had kept all its kindness. He spoke nothing but soft and firm words, and they were greeted with enthusiasm.

Colonel Freemantle has retained a deep impression of the firmness of the Confederate soldiers during the sufferings and perils of their retreat. The words that flew from mouth to mouth were not discouraged. "Let's be confident. The old man will get us to Washington yet. This day's job has not made us as ill as one thinks." And the march went on;



slowly, in an order and a touch of good spirit that proved the vitality of their hopes. Williamsport, on the Potomac, had been given as the point of rallying. That was where one would try to cross the river, beyond which, security was to be found. Lee had dispatched forward all his wagons of luggage, his wounded, and 7 thousand prisoners. He, himself, had remained behind and covered the retreat.

It is said that a corps of 6 thousand Northern horsemen with artillery tried to cut the long convoy, attacking unexpectedly part of the escort which numbered in all 3 thousand men. It succeeded in surrounding it. The Southern commander did not try to hide the danger to his men. "If we don't burst through their lines," said he, "we will be made prisoners; which is not, in itself, a great affair. But realize that General Lee will be ruined, and for all the campaign. We are too poor, we Southerners, to be able to lose supplies like these." At the name of Lee, the Southerners, shaking off the memory of their defeat, regained the spirit that usually belongs only to the victor. Their energetic defense gave time to send them help, and when the General joined the convoy, the faithful escort had the joy of presenting him the wagons, saved for the love of him, without a single one missing.

At last, the First Battalion reached the banks of the Potomac. Alas, that river, always quite fast, and too often acting like a torrent, had overflowed. Enlarged by the rains,

it had become impassable. During seven days, Lee's army, pressed from the north by Meade, hemmed in from the south by the deep and fast waters of the Potomac, had to wait with little ammunition and still less food, for the crossing to become possible.

Another preoccupation than the one of being head of the army was weighing down on our general's heart. Stewart, when he finally joined him in Gettysburg, had informed him that his second son -- a brilliant officer -- had been seriously wounded in the unfortunate fight that caused the cavalry to be late; and had remained prisoner of the Federals. Now, President Davis, having a few days before announced his intention to execute two federal captains as reprisal for the murder of two Confederate captains caught in Kentucky, the Northerners threatened to shoot young Fitzhugh Lee if President Davis carried out his threat.

Such a degree of fierceness had been reached that the most revolting acts seemed quite natural. Impossible for the General, separated from the rest of the world, to use the slightest influence on President Davis -- impossible even to know if there still was time, if his son was still alive. It is with this fatherly anguish, added to his responsibility as Commander in Chief, that General Lee spent those seven long days of waiting near the flooded river.

In spite of this moral agony, he did not lose a minute: earth works were thrown up everywhere, increased every day,



and protected the feeble army. The occasion seemed so favorable for the Federals that one was sure they would seize it. At any moment, one was to expect an attack.

Careful to maintain his army's spirit in face of a situation that could, at any moment, become desperate, the General addressed himself to his troops on July 11th in these terms:

"Headquarters, army of Northern Virginia, July 11th, 1863. General Order number 15:

"After the long and trying marches, endured with the fortitude that has ever characterized the soldiers of the army of Northern Virginia, you have penetrated to the country of our enemies and recalled to the defense of their own soil those who were engaged in the invasion of ours. You have fought a fierce and sanguinary battle which, if not attended with the success which has hitherto crowned your efforts, was marked with the same heroic spirit that has commanded the respect of your enemies, the gratitude of your country, and the admiration of mankind.

"Once more, you are called upon to meet the enemy from whom you have torn so many fields -- names that will never die. Once more, the eyes of your countrymen are turned upon you; and again do wives and sisters, fathers and mothers, and helpless children lean for defense on your strong arms and brave hearts.

"Let every soldier remember that on his courage and

fidelity depends all that makes life worth having: The freedom of his country, the honor of his people, and the security of his home. Let each heart grow strong in the remembrance of our glorious past and in the thought of the inestimable blessings for which we contend.

"And, invoking the assistance of that Heavenly Power, which has so singly blessed our former efforts, let us go forth in confidence to secure the peace and safety of our country.

"Soldiers, your old enemy is before you. Win from him honor worthy of your right cause, worthy of your comrades dead on so many illustrious fields.

"Robert E. Lee, General commanding."

The next day passed away and the anticipated attack did not take place. During the following night -- 13th to 14th of July -- while the Southerners were astonished by the inaction of the Federals, the waters retracted, the river became fordable, and the army managed to cross it without any other loss than a few carriages and two guns sunk in the mud. The crossing lasted twelve hours. From the beginning, rain began falling again, threatening to make the waters rise. During the whole night, and until the middle of the following day, Lee sat on his horse under the rain going from the ford to a bridge that he had just built, but the solidity of which he only vaguely trusted. He ordered everything, looked after everything, apparently impassive. However, at 1:00 p.m., as



the rear guard was crossing the bridge that the rising waters were beginning to lift, he heaved a great sigh, as if delivered from a terrible weight. His officers noticed then that his face was distorted. Exhaustion had at last got the better of him. One of them, Stewart, served him some coffee. "The most delicious I have ever drank," said General Lee. And in his turn -- which means always the last -- Lee urged his horse into the waters and reached the other side while a few blows of the axe precipitated the remains of the bridge into the flowing waters.





## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### COLD AND HUNGER

As he reached the Virginian land, Lee learned that the life of his son was saved; but his young daughter-in-law, already ill, had not been able to resist such anguish, and had died thinking her husband was condemned.

He learned also that an irretrievable disaster had hit the Confederation. Vicksburg, last barrier that, on the Mississippi, prevented the Federals from free circulation, had just succumbed. Except in Virginia, the armies of the North had no more obstacles in front of them. They were free to unite and march against Richmond. No hope for a final triumph was left.

On July 15th, a decree from President Davis enrolled all valid men from 17 to 45. No profession was exempted from military service. Thousands of women and young girls took the places of the employees becoming soldiers, in the offices, the administration, the shops. The President ordered a day of humiliation and prayer that their General announced to his troops by a general order that finished in these terms:

"Soldiers, we have sinned against Almighty God. We have forgotten his signal mercies and have cultivated a revengeful, haughty, and boastful spirit. We have not remembered that the defenders of a just cause should be pure in His eyes, that our times are in His hands, and we have relied too much on our own arms for the achievement of our independence.

"God is our only refuge and our strength. Let us humble ourselves before him. Let us confess our many sins, and beseech him to give us a higher courage, a purer patriotism, and more determined will; that He will convert the hearts of our enemies, that He will hasten the time when war, with its sorrows and sufferings, shall cease, and that He will give us a name and a place among the nations of the earth.

"Robert E. Lee, General"

Meade had suffered too much to be able to worry the Southern army. Week after week passed without seeing him appear. In November only he came to occupy the position that he had already held on the northern bank of the Rapidan. His army counted 60-to-70 thousand men; Lee's 30-to-35 thousand.

A few battles of small importance took place during the end of November. We will leave them in the shade and pick up our story at the beginning of the 1863 - 1864 winter.

Once again, Longstreet's corps has been taken away from Lee's army and sent to Tennessee to try to slow Sherman's progress. The empty spaces left in the ranks of the Southerners by his departure, as by the bloody Gettysburg campaign, have not been filled in. This is not a sign that the population disregards the supreme duties imposed on them by the dangerous situation of their fatherland. Far from it. All the citizens are under the flag; and in the whole of Virginia, one would not find six hundred white men who would have escaped the government's call. But, exhaustion seems to



have reached its extreme limit. There is a lack of men. None are left, and to feed the small number remaining, bread is missing also.

It is necessary to spread the regiments over great distances, far apart, and expose them to all the dangers of isolation because their concentration would famish a region.

The South asks from its allies wheat, bread -- nothing comes. Tobacco fills the farms, cotton is rotting in the barns, and Virginia is dying of hunger.

By the rigorous cold in the barracks of their camps, the Southerners are reduced to insufficient rations even for besieged soldiers. Four ounces of bacon and a handful of corn flour. The General shares all the hardships of his men. His usual fare is a corn biscuit, cabbage -- the cabbage boiled in salt water -- a piece of meat only twice a week.

Some important people came, after an inspection, for dinner at the headquarters. It was not a day when meat was available, but Lee ordered his servant to find some at all costs so as to enhance the usual fare. And, effectively, a large dish of cabbage was brought in at dinner, decorated in the center by a very small piece of bacon that really looked like an island in a sea of greenery. The General played his role of host with his usual politeness. Several times the suggestion was made to share the piece of bacon; but each guest, feeling the value of such a treat, refused, discreetly, to have a taste, and the piece was taken back intact. The

next day it did not reappear, and the General asked what had become of it. The servant had to confess that, unable to buy anything in the camp for yesterday's dinner, he had borrowed the piece of bacon from a messenger; and, he added, as the guests hadn't wanted it, he just had to return it to the person from whom it came.

If such were the treats for the chiefs, one can imagine what was the soldier's daily fare, and one is astonished when one looks over contemporary publications, not to find any complaints. But their General did not consider it below his dignity to sweeten their deprivations by showing how much he liked them and by sustaining their spirits by awakening inspired thoughts.

"Headquarters Army of Northern Virginia, January 22, 1864, General Order Number 7:

"The Commanding General considers it due to the army to state that the temporary reduction of rations has been caused by circumstances beyond the control of those charged with its support. It's welfare and comfort are the objects of his constant and earnest solicitude, and no effort has been spared to provide for its wants. It is hoped that the exertions now being made will render the necessity of short duration, but the history of the army has shown that the country can require no sacrifice too great for its patriotic devotion.

"Soldiers! You tread with no unequal steps the road by which your fathers marched through suffering, privation, and



blood to independence! Continue to emulate in the future, as you have in the past, their valor in arms, their patient endurance of hardships, their high resolve to be free, which no trial could shake, no bribe seduce, no danger appall."

Such a language rang beyond the ranks of the army, and the country in its entirety reaffirmed its resolution when hearing its echo. The gratefulness for the General's persevering devotion, the enthusiasm for his chivalrous character, had become unanimous feelings in the nation. Perhaps there was not a single family who would not know, through a son or a brother, what Lee was in his camp. So, to the feeling of admiration for the Chief, who was alone -- or almost alone -- the hope of the country, was added the gratitude -- personal and intimate, if one dares say so -- of each person for the proofs of attentive affection that their loved ones had received.

It is said that very rarely does one meet a superior man -- what one calls a great man -- who has preserved the charming virtue of kindness and has remained, through life, thoroughly respectable. It is a glory for a country to believe that such a character can exist and to honor him when he has been recognized as such.

The General was known to be a first-rate tactician. He was admired for his calm and ability and his most brilliant courage without the slightest hint of bragging. But, what one loved still more in him was the private man -- the generous

and tender heart that, in spite of its passion for his family -- had put it at the service of the fatherland. And who, in the same way, in spite of his care for his soldiers, put their honor, in time of danger, above their life.

Finally, if the Northerners had known to appreciate in Lincoln the man of faith, the Southerners knew how to revere, in the person of Lee, a Christian worthy of this name. Sincere, strong, and yet unassuming convictions irradiate a truth that imposes itself.

Lee was one who talked but little, even about subjects that filled his heart; and whose concentrated feelings retained all their energy. When the word 'duty' escaped his lips, one knew that his thinking rose still higher than its expression, searching at the feet of God himself his holy will.

No doubt he had a soul naturally valiant and serene; but, through the richness of his heart, he possessed everything you need to suffer intensely. And when the time came for him of exceptional suffering, the strength that God gives to those who, in spite of all, believe in His greatness, alone was that which preserved him from despair. At least General Lee was never to suffer from the ungratefulness of his fellow citizens.

One remembers that Mistress Lee, driven out by the advance of the enemy, first from Arlington turned into a cemetery, next from the White House destroyed by fire, had



taken refuge at Richmond. Her daughters were active in all sorts of feminine charity occupations. As for her, though she was paralyzed, she had, through her advises, the best influence on the measures taken for the ill and wounded.

Moved by the noble steadfastness of Mrs. Lee, and wanting to give the General a public mark of gratitude, the Municipal Council of Richmond voted the purchase, at the expense of the town, of a house as a residence for the family. The General declined the council's offer and obtained that the money for the purchase would be devoted to the help of victims of the war more deprived than his wife and children.



COPYRIGHT, 1911, REVIEW OF REVIEWS CO.

ULYSSES S. GRANT

GENERAL-IN-CHIEF OF THE FEDERAL ARMY IN 1865.  
BORN 1822; WEST POINT 1843; DIED 1885.



## CHAPTER NINETEEN

### GRANT MARCHES ON RICHMOND - THE WILDERNESS

#### SPOTSYLVANIA

The long winter finally ended, and with spring the rumor of the immense preparations made by the Northern states came to the poor Confederates.

Mississippi was now conquered, the corps of Bragg and Longstreet were defeated. The Northern armies, with their manpower doubled since autumn, had before them but Richmond that seemed worth their attack. While General Sherman, the smart victor of the west, was getting ready to break through from the Mississippi to the Atlantic coast and then go up to Virginia across Georgia and North Carolina; another army, that of General Butler, advanced east along the James River. Then, thanks to its gunboats controlling the river, it took hold of the Bermuda Peninsula in the heart of Virginia, fourteen miles from Richmond, and was strengthening its positions.

But the most dreaded adversary was going to be, again, General Grant with the powerful army of the Potomac and its 148 thousand men. Threatening, in the North, the 52 thousand men -- the Southerners last hope -- that General Lee was gathering with great difficulty, to oppose him. Grant was already announcing his plan in the campaign, which he intended to be the last of the war. "I will use up his forces before he uses up mine," he said, as a man realizing the power of his immense resources.





A TELEGRAPH BATTERY-WAGON NEAR PETERSBURG, JUNE, 1864

The operator in this photograph is receiving a telegraphic message, writing at his little table in the wagon as the machine clicks off the dots and dashes. Each battery-wagon was equipped with such an operator's table and attached instruments. A portable battery of one hundred cells furnished the electric current. No feature of the Army of the Potomac contributed more to its success than the field telegraph. Guided by its young chief, A. H. Caldwell, its lines bound the corps together like a perfect nervous system, and kept the great controlling head in touch with all its parts. Not until Grant cut loose from Washington and started from Brandy Station for Richmond was its full power tested. Two operators and a few orderlies accompanied each wagon, and the army crossed the Rapidan with the telegraph line going up at the rate of two miles an hour. At no time after that did any corps lose direct communication with the commanding general. At Spotsylvania the Second Corps, at sundown, swung round from the extreme right in the rear of the main body to the left. Ewell saw the movement, and advanced toward the exposed position; but the telegraph signaled the danger, and troops on the double-quick covered the gap before the alert Confederate general could assault the Union lines.

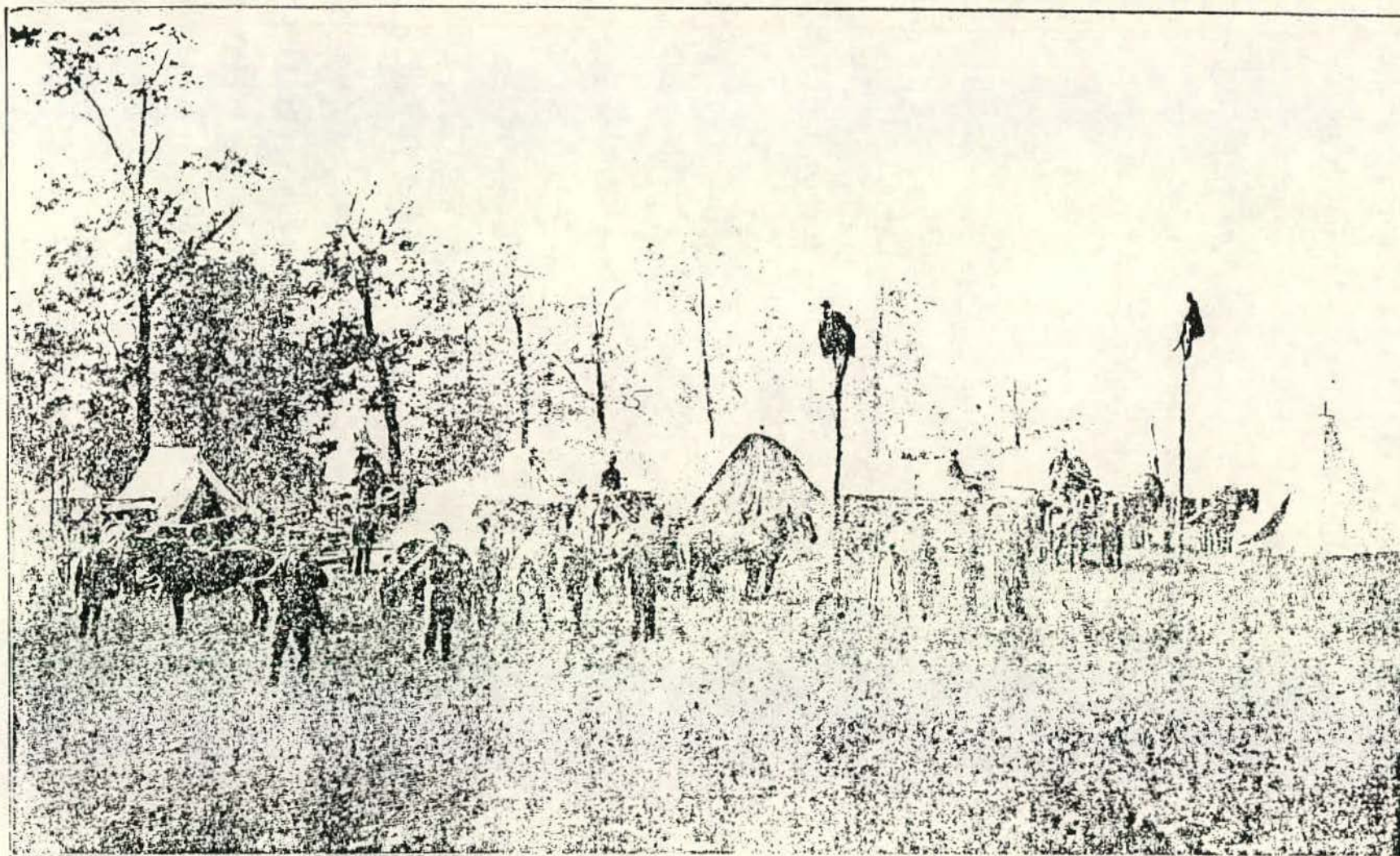
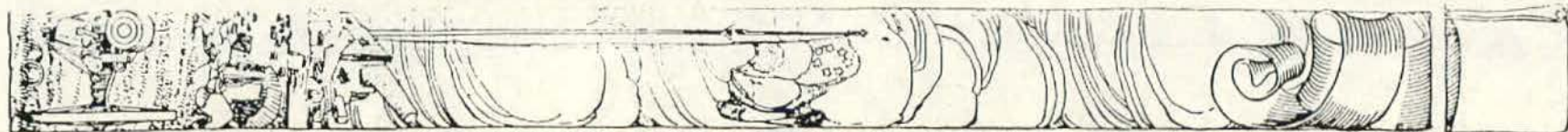


The press exhorted him to be prudent. "The Virginian army," wrote the reporter who had followed its long fights, "is an army of veterans. It is now an instrument that has reached its greatest perfection. Is it possible to beat it? We don't know. To weaken it gradually by killing its men is, perhaps, the only practical tactic." And Grant, thanks to the abundance of his recruits, had precisely all that was necessary to follow that advice.

No one realized the danger better than General Lee. He had one of those characters, rare in all nations -- and that our country will have to produce if it cares to recover its strength -- one of those natures whose firmness does not need illusions.

Already, in March, he had told President Davis that the time to negotiate had come. A long resistance seemed, to him, already impossible. The Richmond government, deluded by who knows what wild dreams, took no notice of his warnings. But in May, the dangers of the situation had become too evident for anybody to ignore them. From all directions -- west, east, north, and soon even from the south -- the enemy was approaching, countless, seasoned, abundantly provided with everything that would make it irresistible. One single army with a few men, apparently worn out, aimed to oppose it. In spite of its past successes, in spite of its illustrious commander, could it succeed? A feeling of solemn expectation filled all souls; and from the hearts of the Southern women,



Approved by *James C. Henry* & Co.EXAMPLE 10.10.1.  $\mathbb{R}^n$  IS A VECTOR SPACE

Here the camera has caught the U. S. Military Telegraph Construction Corps in mid-act. In April, 1864, the 150-odd men composing it were active throughout the war in pole-erecting and stringing wires in order to keep the Central Telegraph Corps in constant communication with the armies at all times. Lincoln spent many an evening in the White House



gushed out, at the last moment, a message to the Confederate soldiers in which their wives, daughters, sisters, beseeched them to be, in the name of the salvation of their blood-soaked homeland, faithful to themselves and to their glorious cause.

On May 3rd, the Federal army set off; and fording the Rapidan, began crossing the wilderness -- that same desert of bushes and brushwood, on the edge of which had taken place in 1863, the Battle of Chancellorsville. Grant was pressing his march. He did not think Lee would dare wait for him, and the easiness with which he had crossed the river convinced him that the Confederate army was surely in full retreat.

The Northern General's real hope was to reach the Confederates after the brushwood of the wilderness in the large wide space that stretches between Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg. He knew he would find there a land where he would lose nothing of the advantage of being so numerous. The great attack, launched at the right moment, would open for him the road to Richmond; and, beaming with hope, anxious only that Lee may avoid his pursuit, Grant hastened the march of his fine army.

On May 5th, at the moment he was going to get out of the thick underbrush in which he could not spread a single regiment, he found himself suddenly attacked with extreme vigor along all the line. Lee had not considered to retreat. Hidden in those wild depths, known better by his soldiers than by his assailants, he had watched intently for the moment when

the particular difficulty of the region would help the reduced number of his troops; and that moment had come.

The fight was unrelenting and deadly. On all points, the Federals had to stop, then retreat. But there was no panic, nor head-long flight. On the following day -- the 6th -- right from daybreak, Lee had to renew his attacks against an army withdrawn on itself -- compressed one could say -- that was far from having exhausted its strength. The merciless fight lasted fifteen hours. The trees took fire -- as in Chancellorsville -- burning the wounded, suffocating even valid soldiers. And, when the night of the 6th arrived, both armies were still face-to-face, hiding their wounds, concealing their losses, still ready for a new fight. Twenty thousand Northerners were scattered on the ground. Lee counted 7 thousand killed or wounded.

Renouncing to open the passage by sheer strength, Grant tried, at least, to oblige Lee to back away. He decided, therefore, to go and place himself between the General and Richmond. Continuing to keep the battlefield alive by skirmishes, he gradually moved his troops by his left flank towards Spotsylvania's important position a few miles to the west.

The Federals were going as fast as they could. They had no doubt about a success of their maneuver. To their great surprise, they found, on arriving in Spotsylvania after a night march, the Confederate army facing them, established on



the very position they coveted. It was already covered with earth defenses, and like the brush in the wilderness, completely obstructed the passage. Lee had guessed -- or surmised -- Grant's movement; and the road to Richmond was once more defended by his valiant sword. (1)

The 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, were four days of bitter fighting. The isolated corps suffered various fortunes, but the firm attitude of the troops, on both sides, remained the same. The adversaries were worthy of one another.

Among the Southerners, one single and short moment of disorder happened. It was at the beginning of the second day. The Federals were concentrating the fire of all their artillery on one single point: the center of the Confederates. Lee noticed a sort of wavering in the Texans' brigade, plowed by the cannon balls. A moment of hesitation that could weaken the whole army.

Taking the command of the Texans himself, and pulling off his hat so as to be recognized, he launched himself at their head. The branches, mowed down by the firing, rained on the old warrior while, with his eyes on fire, he pointed at the enemy with his sword.

---

(1) The earthen defenses that played such an important part in the history of the American Civil War were often upheld by tree trunks. (See Lee Child -- General Lee, His Life and His Campaign, p. 290.)

But a cry erupted from all the chests, "Lee to the back! Lee to the back! We will advance, but alone." And those of the Texans who were near him gathered around him, beseeching him to step back, and swearing they would conquer back the lost terrain. "We will not move an inch," shouted one, "so long as you remain there."

The General gave in. He reined in his horse, and the Texans were soon carried away, ahead of him, by their enthusiasm.

A few minutes after, they had accomplished their word, and the Federals, repulsed to their guns, abandoned the field.

Bravery under fire is not so uncommon. It seems to be necessary for the chief of an army. But, another souvenir has been kept by General Lee during that battle at Spotsylvania which will make us understand how the soul of this energetic fighter was, even in the heart of the fight, devoid of any feeling of hate against the adversaries.



## CHAPTER TWENTY

### GRANT FAILS AT COLD HARBOR - THE CRATER

Imagine the situation at Richmond, where all the attacks converged now. We have just seen Grant advancing from the north, slowly but surely, in spite of his losses and Lee's resistance. On the east, the army of General Butler, that had gone up the James River, had fortified itself in the Promontary of Bermuda, three leagues from Petersburg, and remained there as a permanent menace. From the southwest, Meade was advancing with the Old Army of the Potomac. From the northwest, through the valley of the Shenandoah, Sherman -- victor of Atlanta -- was expected. (1)

One single railway remained open for communications between the besieged town and the southern provinces, and it was easy to predict the time when it would be cut off. At the end of May, the successive advances of General Grant had brought him on the banks of the Pamunkey where 16 thousand men from General Butler's army joined him. This new reenforcement gave him the desire to try a decisive action.

Lee, for his part, had incessantly asked for men and guns, but had obtained nothing; and it became evident that he could only count on himself. With his usual forethought, he had occupied the banks of the Chikahominy, the positions of Cold Harbor, where, two years before, he remembered having

---

(1) Shenandoah means daughter of the stars.

obliged McClellan to retreat.

On June the 3rd, the Confederates received the shock of an army three times more numerous; but their positions, excellent by nature, had been made impregnable, thanks to simple well-conceived earth works. Well sheltered, the Southerners escaped the enemy fire; whereas none of their shots were wasted. It was a horrifying slaughter, such as one's heart fails to describe.

The first cannon shot had been fired at 10:30. At 12:00, in less than two hours, 13 thousand Northerners has succumbed and such a horrible success had cost the South only twelve hundred men.

General Grant decided, nevertheless, to renew the attack. His lieutenants transmitted the order. The soldiers, convinced of the pointlessness of their efforts, refused to obey. Obligated to retreat, Grant went to join Butler's army. He had announced at the beginning of the campaign that he would crush the enemy with human blows, and the men shied away from the sacrifices. Lee's triumph was that of military art over number and force.

The population of Richmond had heard the cannon quite close at hand. The second victory of Cold Harbor was considered as liberation. The population believed too easily that Lee was, by himself, invincible -- that the number of soldiers did not matter, and that, so long as he kept the command, they would be secure.



And yet, danger was increasing. The circle formed by the Federal armies was narrowing hour by hour. If Grant had been checked, he was not destroyed. He still threatened Petersburg and Richmond. Besides, Meade and Sherman were getting closer and they would be ready to join their strength to his.

General Lee dedicated himself to the defense of those two towns, linked up by trenches and earth forts during the weeks that followed the second battle of Cold Harbor.

In vain, the enemy tried -- by real or fake attacks -- to draw him out of his entrenchments. He detached against them just enough troops to contain them; but he, himself, would stay at the post he considered important, without anything distracting him from his watchfulness. For example, on July 25th, several Federal divisions attacked Richmond vigorously. Lee found himself obliged to oppose considerable forces -- at least considerable by comparison with his own weakness. But, his military instinct preserved him from a mistake of forgetting Petersburg, which was really the most menaced.

Effectively, on July 30th, in the morning, a tremendous explosion brought havoc on the city walls, and threw into the air half of a district of the town. An entire fort had blown up, leaving in the walls a chasm of a hundred and fifty feet. It would take us too far away from our subject to describe how the Northerners had managed, in secret, to bore a tunnel five hundred feet long and to bring under the fort 12 thousand pounds of powder. But, try to realize, just when the guns are

still blasting at Richmond, the frightening commotion of such an explosion!

Then, before the swirls of smoke and dust have settled, before the scope of the disaster is revealed, the powerful Federal artillery, previously unlimbered, belches forth a hail of bullets on the big chasm that a column of 16 thousand men is ready to clear. Indeed, Petersburg seemed lost. How Lee's veterans resisted the surprise and the terror -- how they revealed themselves calm and devoted, covering with their chests, then with guns hastily brought up, the ridge of the walls in front of which the explosions had dug an immense ditch? These questions should be asked to the creative and sometimes fearsome power of example that transforms soldiers to the image of their Chief. The 16 thousand Federals thought they were going to surprise the town. They had not counted on the firmness of its defender, nor on the deep gap made by the explosion that was still smoking like the crater of a volcano. (1)

They hesitated an instant before plunging into the abyss, and that hesitation was fatal. Just as their artillery slowed its fire to let them advance, the Southern artillery covered those hesitant men with shells. It was an awful confusing jumble. Frightened to advance, frightened to draw back, the regiments -- among which there was a corps of Black -- routed,

---

(1) The 30th of July was named 'The Battle of the Crater'.



frantically, out of their minds. Some of them ran away, others threw themselves in the chasm. The guns pursued them without mercy. Not a single enemy reached the smoking gap, and 4 thousand bodies covered the slopes of the fatal ditch. (1)

This battle was approximately the last of the season. Petersburg was spared any other attack, but all Lee's efforts to break or enlarge the circle around him, made by the enemy's armies, were of no avail. The masses that encircled him were too considerable and too frequently renewed for the most bloody fights to reduce their strength.

---

(1) John Malone finally ordered to stop firing, saying, "This slaying makes one's heart sick." (Emily Mason)



FOR BURNING BY THE CONFEDERATE GOVERNMENT

NANCY HART  
THE CONFEDERATE GUIDE AND SPY

The women of the mountain districts of Virginia were as ready to do scout and spy work for the Confederate leaders as were their men-folk. Famous among these fearless girls who knew every inch of the regions in which they lived was Nancy Hart. So valuable was her work as a guide, so cleverly and often had she led Jackson's cavalry upon the Federal outposts in West Virginia, that the Northern Government offered a large reward for her capture. Lieutenant-Colonel Starr of the Ninth West Virginia finally caught her at Summersville in July, 1862. While in a temporary prison, she faced the camera for the first time in her life, displaying more alarm in front of the innocent contrivance than if it had been a body of Federal soldiery. She posed for an itinerant photographer, and her captors placed the hat decorated with a military feather upon her head. Nancy managed to get hold of her guard's musket, shot him dead, and escaped on Colonel Starr's horse to the nearest Confederate detachment. A few days later, July 25th, she led two hundred troopers under Major Bailey to Summersville. They reached the town at four in the morning, completely surprising two companies of the Ninth West Virginia. They fired three houses, captured Colonel Starr, Lieutenant Stivers and other officers, and a large number of the men, and disappeared immediately over the Sutton road. The Federals made no resistance.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

### LEE'S MISERABLES - THE WOMEN'S ROLE

Winter returned(1) with its greater than usual trail of sufferings. The food shortage had been general. Hands had been missing for cultivating the fields for a long time; and when, by chance, some rare crop would rise where formerly cotton had thrived, the troops -- the partisans -- destroyed it before the corn developed its ears. The severe blockade of the ports prevented the entry of all foreign goods. Until then, Virginia had been able to draw some sustainment from the south entrance; but the victorious march of Sherman from west to east cut all communications, and the scene of war remained separated from the Confederate states. The Virginian population had to put up with the army itself and with the most severe hardships.

Already on December 1st, Lee only had nine days of rations, and it was due to the lucky arrival of a small ship which had escaped the Northern cruisers that the troops were saved from famine. Blankets and clothes, already scarce during the preceding winter, had become scarcer than ever; and yet the enemy was so close that the troops had to stay in the trenches.

"They had a quarter-of-a-pound of rancid 'Nassau bacon' from New England for daily rations of meat. The handful

---

(1) 1863-1864.

of flour or corn meal which they received was musty. Coffee and sugar were doled out as a luxury, now and then only. And the microscopic ration became a jest to those who looked at it.

"Their clothes, blankets, and shoes were no better -- even worse. Only at long intervals could the government issue new ones to them; thus the army was in tatters. The old clothes hung on the men like scarecrows. Their grey jackets(1) were in rags and did not keep out the chilly wind sweeping over the frozen fields. Their old blankets were in shreds and gave them little warmth when they wrapped themselves in them, shivering in the long cold nights. The old shoes, patched and yawning, had served in many a march and battle, and now allowed the naked sole to touch the hard and frosted ground. They were, indeed, Lee's miseries.

"The lines were strange to look at. Uniformity in the clothing had been lost for long, and anything that could be used for dressing was adopted. The strangest rigging up no longer surprised anybody, but some were more particularly capable of exciting compassion. Often guards were on duty only half dressed. One poor man, having a pair of trousers, had to replace the coat by a tartan enrolled around his back. Another one had a coat that covered his legs with only linen

---

(1) Referring to their grey jackets, the color, grey/brown, came from a local nut called butternut.



pants." (1)

A few months before, a book by Victor Hugo, Les Miserables, had been edited in France. It was just translated, and enormous posters had spread the title on the walls of Petersburg. The poor Southern soldiers adopted for themselves that name, 'Miserables', and softened its bitterness by associating it with the name of their beloved General. They became known as 'Lee's Miserables'; but that title was not a recrimination, but a statement of a fact.

Their Chief, alas, felt deeply the deprivation that he saw them endure. No effort on his part seemed costly if he perceived the possibility of reducing -- if only a little -- their sufferings. But, the government declared itself incapable of providing for the most essential needs. The amount of moral strength, of power over himself, during the pressing anxieties of this terrible winter, what he revealed of his devotion, sensitivity -- of tenderness I would say -- astonished even those who thought they knew him best.

It had already been long since the heart of the country, as well as that of his army, were beating like his own. It had been a long time since the trust and admiration of all belonged to him. But, when the Confederation had nobody else but him, when his army was the only one still to stand up, while from all the points of the horizon, hastening as for the

---

(1) Historical.

quarry, the victorious enemy forces were closing in, the country set in him its last hope; and enthusiasm became passion. The Virginian Convention finally had to give in to the popular wish and gave General Lee the supreme military power -- nominating him Commander-in-Chief of all the armies when none other than his own existed, reduced as it was to 33 thousand men, having to defend a line forty miles long against Grant's 150 thousand men (and Grant's army was not the only one he might have to face.

One of Lee's first acts under his new title was to repeat his requests so often made: more men, more soldiers. It was impossible to find any white men. Congress decided to call the blacks.

The General insisted then, that the blacks enrolled should be previously emancipated. "I think those who are employed should be freed. It would be neither just, nor wise, in my opinion, to expose them to the greatest danger: the loss of life; and to refuse them the greatest reward: liberty." The proposed law -- voted too late to have any effect, was the General's inspiration.

We have spoken extensively of the suffering of the army and of its patience. We have said nothing of the civilian population who, inside its walls, was also suffering, devoting itself, and dying. And yet, it is a fine page of the history of this poor human heart that some people like to blacken, when one reads that all the population -- misled



perhaps, but certainly sincere -- chose to suffer to the extreme limits of its strength because it thought that such was its duty.

The Southern women hold a large share in this page of history. It contains events about which women from Strasbourg, Metz, and Paris have the right to say, "We also -- we know what it is."

These last four years, on all the battlefields, and in all the hospitals and private institutions, both sides had employed women by the thousands to serve the ill and the wounded. But, as the fighting became more serious -- and, for the South, more desperate -- a fervent, distressed patriotism invaded them such as charity had previously. The women's domain spread out from the hospitals to the military workshops, to the various administrations -- wherever their presence and their work could replace the presence and the work of men, and thus give a few more soldiers to the homeland. Such a nation explains such an army and helps to understand such a long resistance. (1)

One thing is the spirit of the soldier rushing to victory, another is the perseverance of the warrior -- disappointed by his misfortune, but who feels that whoever is dear to him expects from him, if not victory, at least honorable defeat. Nations

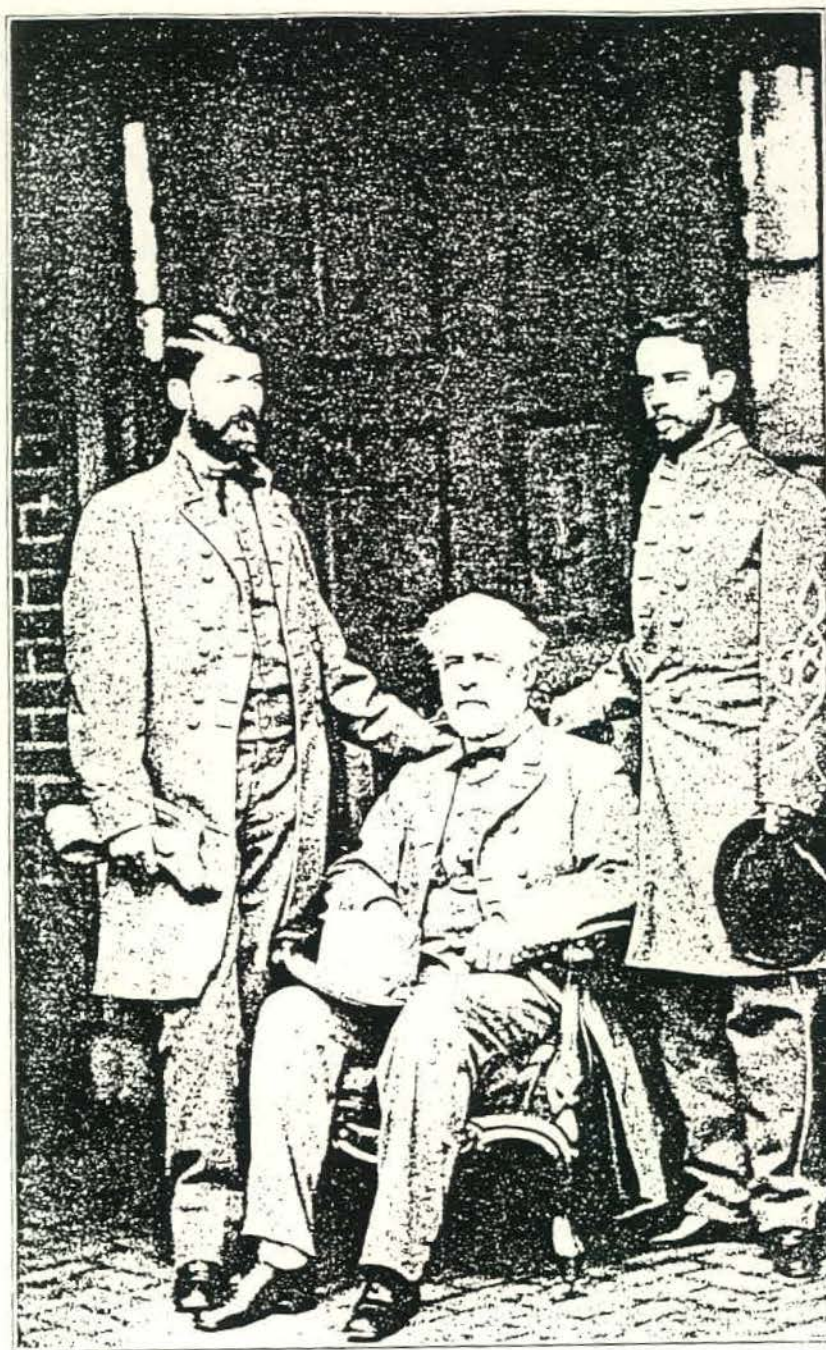
---

(1) "Four years and 700 thousand men were needed to vanquish Richmond, the South's capital. What men! But also, and above all, what women -- daughters, wives, mothers. The American women of the South have revived, in mid-19th century, the patriotism, the devotion, the abnegation of the Roman women during the finest days of the republic."

(Written by Montalembert, correspondent, May 25, 1865.)

have but the armies they deserve. If one of them considers that it has been badly served by its children's battalions, it should probably, before accusing them, beat its own chest.





*Copyright by Review of Reviews Co.*

LEE—WITH HIS SON, G. W. C. LEE, AND COLONEL TAYLOR

No military leader in any country, not even excepting General Washington himself, ever became so universally beloved as Robert E. Lee throughout the South before the close of the war. Rising from the nominal position of Superintendent of Fortifications at Richmond, he became the military adviser of Jefferson Davis and finally the General-in-Chief of the Confederate forces. From the time that Lee began to drive back McClellan's forces from Richmond in the Seven Days' Battles the hopes of the Confederates were centered in their great general. So hastily arranged was that first and final meeting with Grant to discuss the terms of surrender that no photograph was obtained of it, but here are preserved for us the commanding figure, keen eyes, and marvelously moulded features of General Lee as he appeared immediately after that dramatic event. He has just arrived in Richmond from Appomattox, and is seated in the basement of his Franklin Street residence between his son, Major-General G. W. C. Lee, and his aide, Colonel Walter Taylor.





CHAPTER TWENTY-TWORICHMOND IS ABANDONED

However great were the sufferings of winter, the approach of spring was no longer seen as bringing hope, but a great threat. Grant and Sherman were going to be able to cut the railroad -- "The Southside Railroad" -- last means of communication between, on the one hand Petersburg/Richmond and the army, and on the other hand, the extreme South. While it was still free, Lee suggested to his government to evacuate Richmond. He would have protected the retreat with his troops and then melted into the Blue Mountains. There, only, did he believe he could continue the fight and prolong it sufficiently to wear out the North's perseverance. President Davis preferred to remain in the capital and keep the army under his hand. It was agreed that the General's plan would be executed only in case of military set-backs.

Lee yielded and kept watch more vigorously than ever. On March 23rd, he endeavored to stop Grant, whose advance works were reaching the town. At first he was victorious; but the Southerners soon met such powerful forces that it became impossible to make them waiver. Lee had to return to his lines.

The 29th, it was Grant's army's turn to launch a vigorous attack; he renewed it, and doubled his efforts on each one of the following days. Let us not forget that the Federal Army counted at that time 150 thousand soldiers; and that Lee, with

32 thousand men, had to defend an extended line. It is in such circumstances that he seemed to multiply himself.

You could meet him everywhere, indifferent to danger, exposing himself, not out of bravado, but because the necessity of seeing with his own eyes was becoming more absolute. The general belief among his soldiers was that a charm protected his life, and wonderful stories went around -- such as imagination likes to create them -- to explain unharmed heroism.

One of those solemn mornings that might well be the dawn of the last day, Lee arrived at a fort, riddled by the Federal guns. The Southerners were only answering feebly. Guns and soldiers were equally in a poor state, though they were protected by a parapet. The General spoke a few words of sympathy and encouragement. Then, climbing on the earth wall that served as parapet, he remained standing, his field glasses in his hand, inspecting the horizon, without the entreaties of his staff succeeding in making him hurry, in the least, in his observations.

A young lieutenant (1) was the only one to find the way to make him descend. He jumped upon the parapet and remained standing at a certain distance from the General so as to draw the enemy's attention. Lee felt obliged to leave so as to save him. The young officer was already wounded, but

---

(1) His name was Gracie.



survived. Lee had not been hit. The simple truth would not have satisfied the excited imaginations and the story was that shots and bullets stopped in front of the hero and fell, powerless, at his feet. Such an account was followed by many others.

During four days the fight continued without interruption. The heavy gun fire -- at night as well as during the daytime -- was terrifying. On April 2nd, Grant, who had received a reenforcement of fresh troops, tried a colossal effort to separate the enemy in two groups. Two defense bulwarks were surrounded, cut away from the town, and finally conquered. In one of them, Fort Gregg, thirty men only were surviving when Grant entered it. Two hundred and twenty had been killed on the breach. (1)

In spite of the loss of these defense posts, Lee managed to contain the enemy and keep them away from the walls; but, in the evening, he learned that the junction of Sherman with Grant was imminent -- perhaps already realized. His line of retreat would be cut. There wasn't a moment to lose to endeavor to save the army.

Informed by Lee of the departure of his troops, the Confederate Secretary of War, the night of the 2nd to the 3rd,

---

(1) "This is bad for us, as I told them in Richmond," said Lee. "The rope has been so stretched that finally it has broken."

set on fire the immense warehouses of tobacco and cotton -- riches in the midst of which the Southerners had been lacking bread! The population, terrified by the flames, bursting simultaneously in all directions, did not succeed in containing the fires, and soon the whole city was turned into a blazing inferno.(1)

While flames turned the horizon crimson, the army made its way, silently, on the northern bank of the Appomattox, along the only free road left. The men had only one day's ration of biscuits, but a convoy of food was waiting further on at the station of Amelia. On the morning of the 3rd, the army was fifteen miles from Petersburg. It still numbered 15 thousand armed men. It was revived to feel itself moving out of the mud of the trenches. Full of a sort of hope, it cheered its Chief who, on his faithful grey horse -- companion of all his dangers -- advanced in the middle of his troops, displaying a firm and serene face.(2)

The General's plan was simple. By marching fast, he could use the slight gap still open between the armies of

---

(1) The entry of the Federals saved the town from total destruction. They managed to save a few houses, but no monument remained untouched.

(2) Those who knew the habits of the General guessed that circumstances seemed to him very serious on seeing that he had donned his sword, which he rarely did.



Grant and Sherman, who were ready to join. If he succeeded in passing, he would gain North Carolina, through the mountains, and draw unto him the Federal forces. He would operate a diversion that, at least, would postpone the fall of the Confederation and give time to negotiate.

But would the gap still be open? One had to make haste, and so as not to lose a minute, give up collecting food supplies along the way. The army resigned itself to this necessity. During three days of march, it managed to live on one day's ration. It felt it was escaping, and that hope gave the energy to put up with hunger.

A few Northern elements of cavalry tried to stop it. They were quickly toppled over. Fortunately, infantry did not appear; it was outdistanced. Food would be found at Amelia. The fasting, the rain, the mud, the pain of the retreat -- it would all be forgotten.

On the evening of the third day, the famished troops saluted, with shrieks of joy, the railway line of Danville, station of Amelia. Amelia was so near one could see it. One will have food and ammunitions! Who would not feel moved with pity! Here were men -- noble-hearted men -- who were put to such suffering. Our memories of 1870 are too recent not to rekindle at such a disappointment....the army arrives....an order, badly understood, had sent to Richmond, without unloading them, the cars meant to meet the Southerners. There was nothing for them!

It is useless to describe the bitterness of such a disappointment. As a matter of fact, it put an end to the war. The three days of fasting could not be prolonged. Above all, one had to eat. To find something to eat, one had to disperse the troops in the countryside -- already impoverished -- which entailed stopping the retreat and losing the lead gained by such a great effort. Effectively, Grant, who was hastening the pursuit of the Southern Army, sent on the Fourth -- 20 thousand cavalry men -- to Jetersville so as to close the road that Lee had, of necessity, to take.

On the 5th, two corps of Meade's infantry arrived at the same point. The retreat to North Carolina was cut. Did General Lee feel at that supreme hour the temptation of despair? No one knows. Apparently nothing weakened in him; neither his vigilance, nor his resolution, nor his patience. Perhaps his intimate staff noticed a shade of sadness in his eyes or his voice; that was all.

Orders did not take a minute longer than necessary. The road was cut to the south -- well, one would dash to the west. And the army, fed that day only, but without bread for the next day, headed west for Farmville. After Farmville, 37 miles away, still to the west it would find Lynchburg and the protection of the mountains.





National Archives, Brady Collection

Mathew Brady's war photographers came to Charleston along with the Union forces after the city had been evacuated by the Confederates in February 1865, and this is one scene that greeted them. A northern newspaper correspondent painted his view in words:

A city of ruins, of desolation, of vacant houses, of widowed women, of rotting wharves, of deserted warehouses, of weed-wild gardens, of miles of grass-grown streets, of acres of pitiful and voiceful barrenness—that is Charleston, wherein Rebellion loftily reared its head five years ago.

—Sidney Andrews, *The South Since the War*

Looking south on Meeting Street toward Saint Michael's Church and the ruins of the Circular Congregational Church, both sides of the street have been almost leveled from the fire of 1861 and the bombardment.





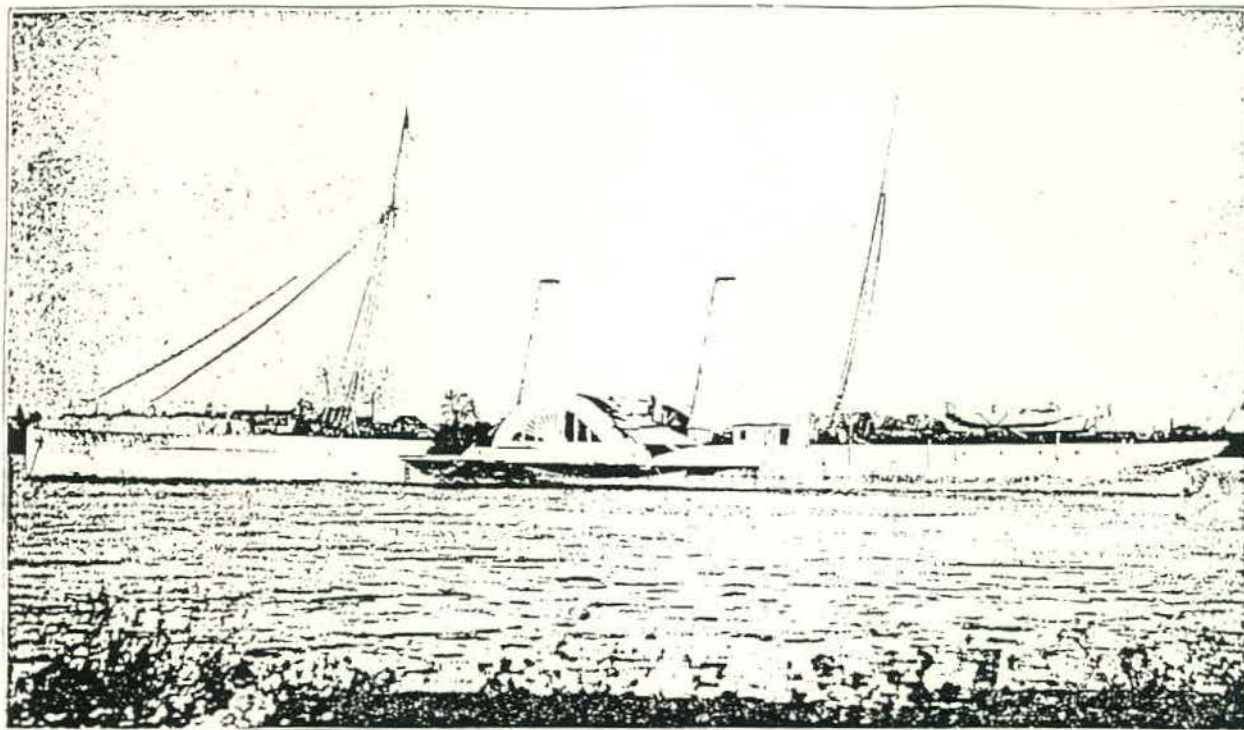
*Copyright by Review of Reviews Co.*

### SUMTER BECOMES A FEDERAL TARGET

The eastern barracks inside Fort Sumter during the Bombardment of Sept. 8, 1863.—The guns of the Federal blockading fleet had now been pounding the fort for many weeks. This but recently re-discovered picture is the work of G. S. Cook, the Charleston photographer. The view is to the right of the exploding shell in the picture on page 100. The flag and guns shown in the earlier picture have been swept away. The upper casemate to the left has been demolished. The lower ones remained intact, however, and continued to be used and even armed to the end of the Confederate's defense. The guns here bore on the channel nearly opposite Fort Moultrie. The bake oven of the barracks—on the chimney of which are a couple of Confederate soldiers—was frequently used for heating solid shot. In one of the lower rooms of the barracks, seen to the right, the ruins later fell upon a detachment of sleeping soldiers.

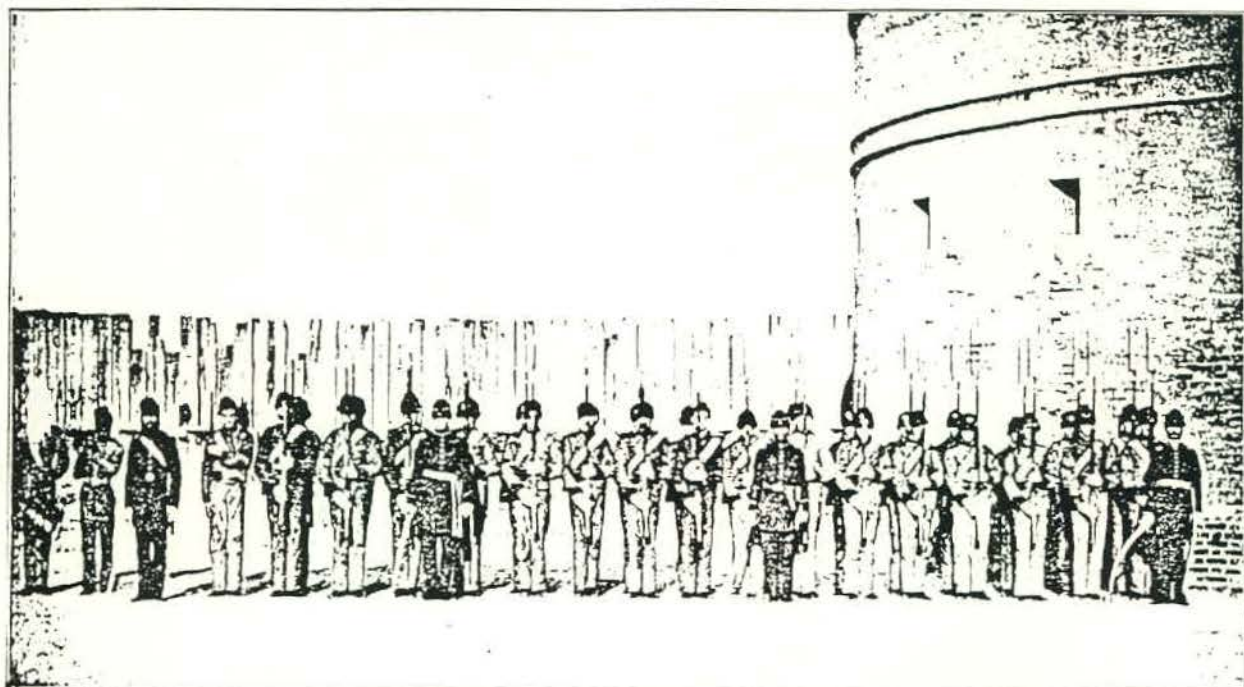
[A-7]





A BLOCKADE RUNNER, THE SWIFTEST CRAFT OF HER DAY

With the regularity of express trains, swift vessels like this one left Nassau and Bermuda and traveled direct for their destination, timed to arrive in the night. So great were the profits of blockade running that in some cases one successful voyage out and back would more than repay the owners for the loss of the vessel. Under these circumstances it can be easily seen that men were tempted to take risks that ordinarily they would avoid.



A CHARLESTON VOLUNTEER COMPANY AT DRILL UNDER THE WALLS OF CASTLE PINCKNEY

In pipe-clayed cross belts and white gloves, with all their accoutrements bright and shining, here we see a volunteer company of young Confederates standing at "Present Arms" and posing before the camera. The four officers standing in front of the line are Captain C. E. Cliechester, Lieutenant E. John White, Lieutenant B. M. Walpole and Lieutenant R. C. Gilchrist. Gilchrist is curving his Damascus scimitar—a blade so finely tempered that its point would bend back to form a complete loop.





## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

### THE LAST FIGHTS

As Lee was leaving the station of Amelia, Grant was arriving in full force to attack. He found only empty houses; and despairing to see his infantry overcome the enemy, he launched his cavalry ahead with orders to cut all bridges and destroy all roads in the direction by which the Confederates would necessarily try to escape.

On arrival at Farmville, the Virginian army found that the bridge on the Appomattox was cut. By the time it took to gather one's spirits, and look for a way to break through the horsemen that encircled it, the Virginian army was overtaken by the Federal army. A sudden attack separated Ewell's corps from the rest of the Southern troops. Encircled by forces five times stronger, he resisted a long time, while his men's exhaustion was such that, in spite of the danger and ardor of the fighting, soldiers would slip down to the ground after discharging their gun and fall into a sleep similar to annihilation. Surrendering became inevitable. Four hundred vehicles, 16 cannons, remnants of regiments, were the victor's bounty. (1) General Ewell handed over his sword just as night was falling. Impatient to complete his triumph, Grant

---

(1) General Custis Lee, son of the General, was taken prisoner in this affair. He had, for the last four days, lived on a handful of corn flour.

assembled his forces and attacked the poor remains of the Confederate Army which, from a distance, seemed in full confusion. A handful of men stopped him.

Between the corps of Ewell captive, and his troops disconcerted (for the first time) Lee, in person, had placed himself. A handful of veterans, half dead of hunger, dragging their rags, summoning up whatever strength they had left, were standing in front of the victorious Federals like a barrier; and the barrier was not broken through. It was a terrible and beautiful spectacle of which the Federal officers kept a moving memory. "The wagons were on fire, lighting up the gaunt and blackened faces of the Southerners as they loaded and unloaded their arms and fought hand-to-hand.

In the midst of them, on his grey horse, the General was motionless; his head raised, his expression firm, with what his soldiers called 'his inspection expression'. He was calm and collected. The four feet of his horse did not take a step back, and night became complete before the flood of Northerners managed to engulf that living rock.

While he was thus containing the enemy, his troops, behind him, were crossing the Appomattox. He joined them on the other bank and had a few entrenchments built to protect whatever rest the short night could still give. However, the Federal cavalry sped forward to close the road while new masses of enemy seemed to thicken from hour to hour around the Southerners. Lee's officers held a counsel of war to examine



what should be done. Nothing else seemed possible but to surrender.

The General, who was still giving orders, was called and was told the regretted, but inescapable conclusion. "Surrender!" exclaimed the old Virginian in a voice that seemed to tremble for the first time. "Surrender! Indeed, no! I have too many good fighting men for that!" As the following day broke, the army resumed its march.

We won't impose on our readers the details of the painful retreat. One's heart bleeds and curses a thousand times the war when such a mass of horrors crush human beings who cannot be comforted by the hope of success. And yet, how could one not pause for a while in front of the man who, with a broken heart, used all his courage to support that of his soldiers?

While he was marching amongst his old companions, having lost the hope of making Virginia a free country, and bearing, in front of God and his fatherland, the responsibility of their life and honor, he felt how heavy was this weight. He did not sway because he did not hesitate. He did not hesitate because he was essentially a man of duty. Men of duty always have easier situations than those who mingle politics with the decisions of their conscience. Lee knew that the duty of defense stops only in front of impossibility; and as the time of impossibility had not yet arrived for him, he continued to fight. The next day, success did not depend on him. On him depended the present day -- the present fight -- and he

fought. Let us salute him, for he was a hero. He has done more for the human soul by knowing how to suffer, and even to let suffer, than people who rely on clever negotiations will ever succeed in doing. He maintained that duty is worth more than life.

The retreat continued. From the right, from the left, enemy squadrons made a threatening escort for the long file of Confederates. They took advantage of all occasions to swoop down on the groups of extenuated Southerners and capture, sometimes a wagon, sometimes a cannon.

As they marched, the Southerners plucked and ate the buds and twigs just shooting from their prison of bark. It was the beginning of May. The grass had not yet started to grow, and neither horses nor mules had the resource of grazing. They fell on the road. Their drivers set fire to the wagons without their teams, and went on their way. When it was an ammunitions chariot, the sinister noise of the explosion warned all the columns and the dying revived for a last regret. Hour after hour, the number of valid soldiers diminished under saddened eyes. Dead men, dead horses traced, with the guns slipping from failing hands, the muddy and bloody road followed by the army.

Three times again these exhausted remains repulsed serious attacks. Strange as it is, in one single fight, the Confederates managed to make 200 prisoners. They even caught



an officer commanding the Federal cavalry.(1)

On the 7th, Grant had already sent to Lee the following message:

"April 7, 1865.

"General R. E. Lee, Commanding C. S. A.

"General:--The result of the last week must convince you of the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia in this struggle. I feel that it is so, and regard it as my duty to shift from myself the responsibility of any further effusion of blood, by asking of you the surrender of that portion of the Confederate Southern Army known as the Army of Northern Virginia.

"Very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"U. S. Grant,

"Lieutenant-General Commanding Armies of the  
United States."

The defeated Chief answered:

"April 7, 1865.

"General:--I have received your note of this day. Though not entirely of the opinion you express as to the hopelessness of further resistance on the part of the Army of Northern Virginia, I reciprocate your desire to avoid useless effusion of blood, and therefore, before considering your proposition,

---

(1) General Gregg.

ask the terms you will offer on condition of its surrender.

"R. E. Lee, General."

"To Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant, Commanding Armies of the United States."

By the exchange of several similar letters, Lee gained time and distance. On the 8th, he wrote again to Grant saying, "I do not think the emergency has arisen to call for the surrender of this army."

The 9th, in the morning, near the station of Appomattox, the Confederate army found itself completely surrounded by an immobile mass of cavalry. Lee still had 8 thousand armed men and nearly 18 thousand unfortunate followers too weak to carry a rifle. The General decided, in a war counsel, that an attempt -- the last probably -- would be made to try to open a way through the enemy lines. Lynchburg was only 24 miles away. If the cavalry was alone, one could succeed once more. If, on the contrary, the Federal Infantry had rejoined and was in force, nothing was left but to surrender. Even at this hour, supreme for all involved, his officers noticed with what grief the General summed up the opinions.

Somebody suggested an interview with Grant. "I would prefer dying a thousand times," murmured the General. "What will be said of us if we surrender?" said somebody else. "That is not the question," answered Lee, rising suddenly. "The question is to know if that is the thing we must do. Then I will take the full responsibility."



General Gordon lead the small attacking column. He succeeded in piercing the ranks of the Federal cavalry; but beyond, he hit the thick battalions of the Northern infantry. Eighty thousand men, it seems. The impossible was there. Lee gave the order to raise the white flag.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

### THE CAPITULATION AND ITS IMMEDIATE FUTURE

The same day a meeting was organized between the two Generals. A Federal officer describes the impression the defeated one made on him.

"General Lee looked very much jaded and worn, but nevertheless presented the same magnificent *physique* for which he has always been noted. He was neatly dressed in gray cloth, without embroidery or any insignia of rank, except three stars worn on the turned portion of his coat-collar. His cheeks were very much bronzed by exposure, but still shone ruddy beneath it all. He is growing quite bald, and wears one of the side-locks of his hair thrown across the upper portion of his forehead, which is white, ....He stands fully six feet one in height....During the whole interview he was retired and dignified to a degree bordering on taciturnity, but was free from all exhibition of temper or mortification. His demeanor was that of a thoroughly possessed gentleman who had a very disagreeable duty to perform, but was determined to get through it as well and as soon as possible."

Better than the officer -- only half sympathizing -- whose impression we have just quoted, Lee's soldiers knew how to perceive under the firm attitude of their Chief, the poignant pain against which he was fighting. Up to the moment of the supreme decision, they had kept surrounding him and repeating to him the same touching requests. "Don't think



about us. We will still follow you. We will go wherever it is necessary."

When, after having signed the capitulation, he reappeared amongst them, bent under bereavement that made all hearts quiver, an immense acclamation of distressed enthusiasm greeted him. All these beaten men broke ranks and, pressing around him, tried to let him hear words of encouragement and of intense affection. It seemed that this multitude, reduced by such extended misfortune and calamity to the last degree of misery, was forgetting its own suffering to think only of its Chief's. And they each took hold of his hand, sobbed against his horse, and received the broken words he tried to pronounce.

"Men, we have fought through the war together. I have done the best I could for you. My heart is too full to say more."

And tears veiled the proud eyes of the old Chief.

The Federals, in spite of the legitimate joy over a triumph that had cost them four years of efforts and fierce fighting, knew how to respect this great misfortune. The military music remained silent. No songs, no shouts, marked their victory. When General Lee, on his horse, rode through their ranks, all heads were uncovered in a spontaneous movement; and when he raised his eyes to thank all this silent homage, he met but with tearful eyes and quivering lips. Even his enemies of yesterday knew how to understand and pity

the fearful champion, defeated at last.

May we be forgiven for insisting on these details. They seem strange to us, with our bitter souvenirs; but we are anxious to give them because they bear witness in favor of the human heart. They also protest against that hard law of hate that one wants to turn into the only law of war. To those who, during our last hardships, have suffered from seeing on one side so many shortcomings, on the other, such a merciless arrogance; who have searched for the great virtues of past days and have sorrowfully wondered why they were getting so rare -- to those who will no longer believe in good, I dedicate this description of a capitulation. Yes, great deeds are still accomplished and are still understood. There still is, in the bottom of human hearts, an echo that resounds to all generous appeal.

The night that followed the surrender of the army was really a night of peace. The Southerners were dying of hunger. Haste was made to distribute, freely, food to them. Instead of being penned apart, they were immediately mingled with the Northerners. All the tents opened up for them. They were treated like guests and not like prisoners. Indeed, the victors felt a more mellow joy than just triumph when they helped such utter distress. Besides, the adversaries could mutually respect one another. The two armies, opposed in combat during four years, knew one another. The one that succumbed under crushing forces had the great memories that



soften affliction. The Federal army remembered its sacrifices and its indomitable perseverance. There was no room between them for unworthy feelings.

It is said that the Federal Chiefs were greatly astonished when they discovered the small number of soldiers and the state of the armies that the capitulation gave them. Seven thousand five hundred men laid down their rifles. Eighteen thousand stragglers, or wounded, could no longer bear the weight of their arms. Soldiers and officers were free to return home on the condition that they would no longer serve against the government of the North.

On the 12th, Lee, escorted by a regiment of cavalry, went, with his staff, to Richmond. A short distance from the poor town that fire had half destroyed, he dismissed his suite, and tried to hide his entry from all eyes. But, he was recognized with his very first steps. From the middle of the smoke and ruins, from the threshold of wrecked houses, women, children, old men -- because no man able to carry arms had remained in the town -- rushed towards him and by their cheers, or their tears, gave him the warmest of welcomes.

The Federal soldiers who occupied Richmond and were wandering in the streets joined his procession. They lifted their shakos on the end of their swords and accompanied him with acclamations. The crowd was so dense that when he arrived in front of the house where Mrs. Lee lived with her daughters, the General could not get enough room to dismount.

People were kissing his feet, kissing his horse. The hurrahs ended in sobs.

Fighting against his emotion, the General finally managed to disengage himself, and for the first time since those cruel years of war, he found himself at last under his own roof and with his family.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVETHE VANQUISHED

The persevering enthusiasm of the population obliged him to shut himself up at home and to go out only at night. In spite of those precautions, the following weeks were like a continuous but painful triumph.

Peace had followed capitulation very soon, and the rebellious city had become a pilgrimage for tourists. Their journey would not have been complete if they had not seen -- or tried to see -- the hero of the South. In vain, his door remained obstinately closed, the crowds stationed in the street, hoping, at least, to catch a glimpse of him from a distance.

Next came the deputations that forced all the barriers and insisted, obstinately, to come into his presence. His former adversaries -- the officers of the Federal Army -- wanted to express their admiration; and his former companions considered they had the right to see, once more, his figure before scattering to their distant homes.

Little by little, the Northern fortresses liberated the prisoners they had made during the preceding campaigns; and each steamer brought to Richmond a quota of poor human beings in rags, who, before beginning the search for their ruined home, wanted once more to salute their General. Each meeting of that nature awakened Lee's pain; and yet, he felt the impossibility of shying away from it.

One day, he had to receive two men -- two ragged Rebs, such as the newspapers called them at the time. They were sent by a hundred comrades out of the prison of Point Lookout to propose to the General that he come to retire in the mountains where, between them, they owned 5,000 acres of land. They offered him a plantation and their labor to cultivate it. "You are not in security here, General," said they. "The President is already in prison. You are as threatened as he is. Come with us. Where we are going, an army couldn't find us; and besides, we are all ready to die, if necessary, to defend you."

"But," said the General, "you would not have your General run away and hide. He must stay and meet his fate." Then he explained to them that the terms of the capitulation insured his life and that he could trust General Grant's word. The poor fellows found it hard to give up their fine plan. In the end, Lee, noticing the raggedness of their clothes, sent his daughter(1) to fetch some of his own clothes, asking them to accept at least this from somebody who no longer had anything else to offer them.

The poor prisoners exploded with joy. "But," they said, kissing the clothes, "we will not take the liberty of wearing them. We will show them to our comrades and will keep them forever."

---

(1) We hold this information from herself.



Another time, it was a letter from one of his veterans that reached him.

"Dear General:--We have been fighting hard for four years, and now the Yankees have got us in Libby Prison. They are treating us awful bad. The boys want you to get us out, if you can. But if you can't just ride by the Libby, and let us see you and give you a good cheer. We will all feel better after it."

Another day, it was a simple soldier of the Federal Army -- an Irishman -- who insisted on speaking to the General in person. In vain, the General had him told, and repeated, that he was busy. The Irishman held his ground, swearing that he would wait as long as necessary; but would not leave before having seen Lee. The latter, obliged to join a meeting, ended up by going downstairs. Immediately, the good fellow, opening a basket, took out a ham, a cheese, superb fruit, and explained: "Hah General, I don't think the less of you because you beat us, and beat us well, in the past. You are a good man and a famous soldier. God bless you." It was impossible to get the Irishman to take back his gifts, that were given the following day to the hospital, where the wounded were still in pain.

Another of these Irishmen, with a heart as hot as his head, was met in the entry by a member of the family who affirmed it was impossible to see the General, who was busy writing a report. "I am sure he is busy," said the visitor.

"I will detain him but one moment. I only want to take him by the hand." At this instant, the General passed through the entry. The discussion drew his attention, and he heard the last words. He came forward, offering his hand. The Irishman grasped it with great emotion. "I have come all the way from Baltimore to take your hand. I have three sons born during the war, Beauregard, Fitz Lee, and Robert Lee. My wife would never forgive me if I should go home without seeing you. God bless you." And he departed.

As weeks passed, then months, the expression of admiration came, not only from America, but from the whole world. Formerly, Cuba had offered Lee -- then simple Lieutenant Colonel -- to be the commandant of their army. Now, it was from everywhere that he received invitations to carry his home out of a region that could only remind him of hardships. England was noticeable for the number of her invitations. Lords, corporations, committees, offered him, for his retirement, among their properties, beautiful estates. Towns offered functions with a remuneration that would be enough to rebuild his former fortune. He was called, for the sake of his own peace, and that of his children, whose future in America seemed compromised. He always answered, "I am deeply grateful, but I cannot consent to desert my native state in the hours of its adversity. I must abide its fortunes and share its fate." Words of this quality were not without merit, and did not remain without effect. If general



respect protected better than any capitulation the illustrious Virginian from the reprisals that the beaten can expect, it was nevertheless true that the Northern yoke seemed heavy to his compatriots -- even odious -- and that the temptation to migrate and find elsewhere the independence they had not been able to conquer by their fighting was great for the Southerners -- for young men, particularly. Wisdom is, apparently, as difficult for nations as it is for individuals.

The North, intoxicated by its success, often strayed away from the moderation to which it would have been so beautiful to remain faithful; and the irritation of minds in the vanquished states did not lack valid excuses.

Through his words and his example, Lee contributed, more than anybody else, to quell the hatreds. Not only one never heard him articulate a severe or malicious word, but he seemed to have taken as special task to interpret all the new laws in their most favorable meaning. Ceaselessly he tried to enlighten the opinion to make their minds more understanding; and if necessary, he knew how to rebuke youth when it gave way to its wrath with bitter or discouraged words. When he heard young men threaten to leave their native land, he would prove to them that their duty was to stay in it, to serve it in all circumstances, to dress its bleeding wounds. That was what he dreamed of doing himself; but how?

Suspect to a certain party that would not forgive him the fame he had won by so many triumphs, and consolidated by

defeats more glorious than many a victory, General Lee compressed his burning desire to serve his country, to devote himself again to his native land. He did not dare get closely related to any project before spirits has reached appeasement, convinced as he was that his name might do harm to the project he had chosen.

So, when from all the points of America -- North as well as South -- his fellow citizens, moved by the loss of his fortune, offered him the means to repair his loses, General Lee asked for still more, and confessed to a friend his innermost pain. He would say, "Yes, my compatriots offer me everything except work." Work, that was the objective -- the ambition -- of the old warrior. Welcomed companion of his happy days, work remained the consolation of his sorrows. What had made the dignity of his fortune, he requested as a privilege for his poverty. And there was something strangely touching in hearing this man, worn out before his time by all his fightings, whose face carried the traces of unbelievable fatigue, ask, as a favor, that his country accept the offer of what remained of his strength.





The last painting from life of Lee was done by the colorful Swiss artist Frank Buchser, whose visit to Lexington in the autumn of 1869 is not mentioned in previous biographies. Buchser had hoped to have Lee dress in his Confederate uniform, but Lee declined to do so, saying, "I am a soldier no longer." Lee compromised by displaying on the table next to him the dress sword, sash, and coat he had worn when he surrendered to Grant at Appomattox, and a wartime hat and a pair of binoculars. This painting, the most original and interesting portrait of Lee, was sent to Switzerland and stayed there. (*Kunstmuseum Bern*)



Lee's second and final office, in the basement of the chapel whose construction was one of his first priorities. It was here that he talked to students whose grades or behavior troubled him. One of them later wrote, "An invitation to visit General Lee in his office was the most dreaded event in a student's life." Everything in the room, including the papers on the table, has been left just as it was on the day he fell fatally ill. (Sally Mann Photo, Washington and Lee University)



Some of Lee's students. This is the first group picture of the Kappa Alpha Order, founded at Washington College in the autumn of 1865. From this handful of young men, all but one of them Confederate veterans, there grew a national fraternity dedicated to the emulation of Lee's character. At present there are more than seventy thousand living members. The student on the left of the front row was the Order's guiding spirit, Samuel Zenas Ammen, a veteran of both the Confederate Army and Navy and later editor of the *Baltimore Sun*. (Kappa Alpha Order)



## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

### CIVIL LIFE - WASHINGTON COLLEGE

Since the year 1749, there was, at Lexington, Virginia, a college -- or academy -- that had known brilliant days. Created by an Irish immigrant, Robert Alexander, who had named it the August Academy, the college had become Liberty Hall after the first victory of the American Republic. Then, General Washington having endowed it in his will with 50,000 sterling pounds, the name of the national hero had been given, by gratitude, to the establishment whose future was ensured by him.

It is common knowledge with what magnificence institutions devoted to instruction are endowed in America. Whatever their level, Washington College had received other important endowments and had been able to recruit excellent professors, build up important collections, assemble all the elements of success.

There also, the war had passed and had accomplished its action of destruction. The buildings had been devastated. The rich library pillaged. The students had dispersed, as well as the professors. They had all taken up fighting and one no longer knew what the survivors had become.

A few citizens, after this great wreck, tried to gather the pieces of wreckage. They found the institution had no money, no professors, no pupils, no hope of finding help in the general ruin of the country. As they were struggling

among all those difficulties, the Board of the college came up with an idea that was going to be its salvation. They thought of inviting to the management of the institution -- to its presidency, as one says in America -- the great vanquished of the South.

Four months after the capitulation of Appomattox, Lee learned, in his retreat, that he had been appointed President of Washington College. (1) Here is the answer he sent to the Board.

"Powhatan County, August 24, 1865.

"Gentlemen:--I have delayed for some days replying to your letter of the 5th instant informing me of my election, by the board of Trustees, to the Presidency of Washington College, from a desire to give the subject due consideration. Fully impressed with the responsibilities of the office, I have feared that I should be unable to discharge its duties to the satisfaction of the Trustees, or to the benefit of the country. The proper education of youth requires not only great ability, but, I fear, more strength than I now possess; for I do not feel able to undergo the labor of conducting classes in regular courses of instruction. I could not, therefore, undertake more than the general administration and supervision of the institution.

"There is another subject which has caused me serious

---

(1) Today, Washington and Lee University.



reflection, and is, I think, worthy of the consideration of the Board. Being excluded from the terms of amnesty in the proclamation of the United States of the 29th of May last, and an object of censure to a portion of the country, I have thought it probable that my occupation of the position of president might draw upon the college a feeling of hostility, and I should therefore cause injury to an institution which it would be my highest object to advance.

"I think it the duty of every citizen, in the present condition of the country, to do all in his power to aid in the restoration of peace and harmony, and in no way to oppose the policy of the State or general Government directed to that object. It is particularly incumbent on those charged with the instruction of the young to set them an example of submission to authority, and I could not consent to be the cause of animadversion upon the college. Should you, however, take a different view, and think that my services, in the position tendered me by the Board, will be advantageous to the college and the country, I will yield to your judgment and accept it; otherwise I must most respectfully decline the offer.

"Begging you to express to the Trustees of the college my heartfelt gratitude for the honor conferred upon me, and requesting you to accept my cordial thanks for the kind manner in which you have communicated its decision,

"I am, gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

"R. E. Lee.

"Messrs. John W. Brockenborough, Rector.

Ch. M. D. Reid; Alfred Leyburn; Horatio Thomson, D.D.;  
Bolivar Christian; T. J. Kilpatrick, Committee."

The Board did not give up its plan, and was right. The Federal Government would have ruined its popularity in the victorious states as well as in the defeated ones if it had been unfair to General Lee. And as a matter of fact, it had no reason to do so. One knew, in Washington, that peace had turned the most loyal and most energetic adversary into the most obedient citizen of the Union. Besides, even during the days of fighting, the chivalrous Virginian had benefited in the eyes of the North, with a sort of immunity. He had not been mixed up with the mass of ordinary rebels. He was taken as a new bayard(1), misled into a wrong cause. The cause was vanquished -- the hero remained. And to the north, as well as to the south of the Potomac, soon everyone would bask in his glory.

The Board of Washington College persisted, and on October 2nd of the same year, 1865, General Lee was established in his new functions. This transformation of a General, Commander-in-Chief, into an educator of the young is a spectacle well made to astonish our French eyes -- particularly when one knows that this General was, before the war, by his birth as

---

(1) Bayard - the fearless and blameless knight.



well as by his fortune, what we would call a 'grand seigneur'. The astonishment is close to incredibility, and yet, nothing is more true and nothing was simpler to realize. For a man of duty, such as was Lee, taking a job appropriate to his rank had little importance when the problem was to obey the law dictated by his conscience; to serve one's country. Any other voice remained silent in front of that one. He had believed he was serving his country. He had wanted to defend it, and the blood shed, the ruins stockpiled, repeated to him that it was lost, this cause of the independence of Virginia to which he had devoted himself.

Now a new line of action was opening to him. A modest one, perhaps difficult to follow, perhaps impossible -- never mind. He entered it with the generous fervor of a patriotism that nothing could exhaust.

Critics were not lacking. He heard himself blamed, even by his friends. "Who can induce you to load yourself with that broken down institution?" he was asked. He would answer, "I have a mission to fulfill." And when he was pressed with questions, he said, "I have seen a great number of young men from the South fall under my flag. I want to consecrate my life at making those who remain, men with a sense of duty."

The future will show if his noble and patient efforts have succeeded. What we know is that he became the idol of his students, as he had been in the past that of his soldiers. While his name attracted professors and pupils, his talent as

organizer brought, in a little over a year, the Institution back to its former fame, and shortly after, made it attain a professional perfection so indisputable that even the Northern states sent their children to it.

Lee taught by his example and by his words those great lessons of faith and patriotism that seem, in a book, too often cold and faded. It was a lesson, the Christian submissiveness of such an energetic soldier, the way he concentrated all his thoughts, all his activity upon his present duties. It was a lesson, the abnegation with which he refused, so as to remain at his humble job, everything that could tempt a legitimate ambition. And when Virginia, returned to peace, asked for the honor of providing very largely for all his needs, it again was a lesson to see him prefer to earn, by his labor, his daily bread.

Finally, it was a lesson -- the greatest of all, and perhaps the most difficult to understand -- to see him, when the proper time had come, be one of the first to sign the request of amnesty, at least to the government of the United States. This act of submission would change nothing in his fate, and to accomplish it was a cruel humiliation for a man so convinced of the justice of his cause. Yet, as it was important for the pacification of the spirits and for the interests of the Southerners, deprived of their civil rights so long as they hadn't been granted amnesty, that a solemn step be taken, Lee sacrificed himself. Forgiveness was



refused to him, but the works of appeasement were, none-the-less, launched -- and by the very hands that had been last to let go the sword.

Lee had kept from his military life the habit of addressing the young population of Washington College in 'orders of the day'. His students knew what sorrow they would inflict on him by their bad deeds, and the fear of clouding his venerable forehead was often enough to maintain them on the right track. However, there happened to be young crazy heads who abused the extreme liberty that students in America enjoy. We have already seen with what delicacy General Lee knew how to express a reproach. Here is one of the 'orders of the day' occasioned by a spree of young students.

"Washington College, Nov. 25, 1866.

"The Faculty desire to call the attention of the students to the disturbances which occurred in the streets of Lexington on the nights of Friday and Saturday last. They believe that none can contemplate them with pleasure, or can find any reasonable grounds for their justification. These acts are said to have been committed by students of the College, with the apparent object of disturbing the peace and quiet of a town whose inhabitants have opened their doors for their reception and accommodation, and who are always ready to administer to their comfort and pleasure.

"It requires but little consideration to see the error of such conduct, which could only have proceeded from

thoughtlessness and a want of reflection. The Faculty therefore appeal to the honor and self-respect of the students to prevent any similar occurrence, trusting that their sense of what is due to themselves, their parents, and the institution to which they belong, will be more effectual in teaching them what is right and manly, than anything they can say....

"R. E. Lee,

"President Washington College."

It is part of God's justice that all effort for the good carries its own reward. The General tasted the fruits of his labors. He felt that he was blessed, that he was progressing, and he was able to write, one day, to one of his old companions, "I make my happiness with the duties of civil life."



## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

### LAST DAYS

The sad and inevitable sequences of the Civil War happened to grab the General away from his works. He was assigned as witness and had to appear in the suit brought against the former President of the Confederate States, Jefferson Davis -- suit that was never concluded.

Some of his answers deserve the attention of those who have followed his career up until now.

The magistrate who asked the question seems to have as his main objective to collect information about the state of mind in the South.

-- "Could you," he asked, "find in your neighborhood, in Virginia, a jury fairly chosen, that would judge Davis guilty of high treason for having made war against the United States?"

-- "I do not think that they so consider it," General Lee replied -- "In what light would they view it? What would be their excuse or justification? How would they escape in their own mind? I refer to the past -- I am referring to the past and as to the feelings they would have. So far as I know, they look upon the action of the State in withdrawing itself from the government of the USA as carrying the individuals of the State along with it: That the State was responsible for the act, not the individual; and that the ordinance of secession, so called, or those acts of the State which

recognized a condition of war between the State and the general government, stood as their justification for their bearing arms against the government of the United States."

-- "State, if you please, what your personal views on the question were."

-- "That was my view," replied Lee, "that the act of Virginia in withdrawing herself from the USA carried me along as a citizen of Virginia and that her laws and her acts were binding on me."

The magistrate asked, "Did you take any oath of fidelity or allegiance to the Confederate Government?"

-- "I do not recall having done so; but it is possible that when I was commissioned, I did. I do not recollect whether it was required. If it was required, I took it, or if it had been required I would have taken it; but I do not recollect whether it was or not."

One reminded the General, to hold one more grievance against him, that he himself had, at the beginning of the trouble, made efforts to maintain peace. One referred to his own words. He did not deny them.

-- "At that time, I did believe that it was(1) an unnecessary condition of affairs and might have been avoided

---

(1) "...it was...." -- referring to a state of war.



if forbearance and wisdom had been practiced on both sides." (1)

At last the General was free to return home. All the towns he went through put out their flags as if the inhabitants tried to reduce, by the manifestations of their affection, the painful emotions of the last suit in which he had just been requested to appear. However, if the moral energy of the old Chief was still present, his strong health seemed weakening. A man's heart cannot contain so much ardor, feel such disappointments, without using its strength and ending up broken by the effort.

Deceived by his silent resignation, his friends hoped that his declining strength did not have the cause that his family, more tenderly and intimately united with him, could not ignore. During the years 1868, '69 and '70, they obtained from him that he would try various spas. They flattered themselves to see him revive -- his age was not so great, he was so deeply loved! He gave in and went where his doctors advised him to go.

---

(1) If any minutes of General Lee's testimony were preserved, they have never come to light, despite the writer's (Douglas Southall Freeman - Vol. 4) search for them. Where my grandmother found her text is still a mystery. She may have had it directly from a daughter of General Lee.

It is customary to say that people have no memory. The affection of the people was, nevertheless, faithful to Lee to the end. In every place where one could hope to see him during the journeys he made for his health, one ran up to acclaim him, deputations insisted on saluting him and showing their respect. He was always received by his former soldiers, some of whom had come from afar to see him. He would shake hands, faces would cover with tears, and never would a bitter word dare to be pronounced in front of him. Besides, if the pain of the past remained in Lee's heart, and if it rekindled each time that the suffering of the vanquished -- consequence of the past -- was revealed to him, peace was established between him and his former adversaries, and this peace beamed forth on all those who approached him. He had reached this degree of Christian virtue that one felt morally better when seeing him, hearing him, thinking of him. It was not only his own soldiers whom he loved and by whom he was loved, it was the Federals also.

Often he was met talking informally with men from the other side and discussing war events in which each side had taken place, under his respective flag. He came to the help of the veterans from the North with the same generosity as with those of the South. "It was one of our soldiers," he would say. "But, wasn't he from the other side?" someone would object. And Lee answered, "That does not matter in the least."



The last year of his life, before going to see, in Norfolk, an old friend, he wrote to him beseeching him to organize no reception because of his bad health and his need for complete rest. Effectively, he met nobody at the station, and relieved to escape speeches -- to find himself incognito -- he went, on foot, to his host. But he soon noticed that everybody took off his hat as he passed. Nobody stopped, he caught no indiscrete look, but all the hats were lowered without a single word being pronounced.

He entered into a church. On his way out, he found two lines of people on the steps of the peristyle, all heads inclined and uncovered. The General, choked by emotion, hastened to his friend's house to avoid encountering any longer those marks, so delicate, of the general sympathy.

On September 28, 1870, after a laborious day, Lee came back home. It was at Washington College, time for dinner had arrived. He walked to the table, surrounded by his family, and was preparing to say grace, which even under a tent he had never missed at the beginning of a meal. Standing, he raised his eyes towards the sky. His lips moved, but no sound came out of them. Paralysis had just hit him, and in this last invocation, it seemed that his soul had spontaneously risen to the God that he had loved and served. However, he breathed a few days more, but without regaining consciousness. His last breath was exhaled on October 12th.

We will say nothing of the deep mourning caused by Lee's

death; nor of the crowds around his coffin, nor of the lugubrious pomp of his last procession. Perhaps have we already insisted too much on the manifestations of veneration and enthusiasm that were showered over this great vanquished human being; but we found encouraging to show, besides the hero, the masses capable of understanding greatness and beauty and proving that they are not necessarily ungrateful and forgetful.

Just as really beautiful things are inevitably admired by all, there is, I believe, in real virtue, something that everyone feels and admires. Nations -- like men -- bring honor to themselves and rise by respecting that which is great and pure. Unfortunately, they do not have, often enough, occasion to give that tribute; and they cease believing in devotion and greatness so rarely encountered.

I will add only one wish for my country. May it be loved as Virginia was loved by Robert Lee. May it be served as Virginia was served by Robert Lee. May from its land, less torn than that of America, arise a generation valiant and pious -- a generation that labors and prays. Then France will find herself believing again in greatness. Her turn will come to know the grateful enthusiasms that uplift the soul.

*The End*



## CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
CHAPTER ONE THE FAMILY, THE MILITARY SCHOOL	1
CHAPTER TWO THE CHILDREN	9
CHAPTER THREE THE INDIANS IN THE WEST, THE MEXICAN CAMPAIGN	15
CHAPTER FOUR IN TEXAS	25
CHAPTER FIVE SOME OF THE CAUSES OF THE WAR	34
CHAPTER SIX FIRST MANIFESTATIONS OF UNREST	41
CHAPTER SEVEN HOW GENERAL LEE FOUND HIMSELF TO BE A REBEL	48
CHAPTER EIGHT FIRST HOSTILITIES - BULL RUN	54
CHAPTER NINE LEE, COMMANDER IN CHIEF, COLD HARBOR - THE SEVEN DAY FIGHTING	61
CHAPTER TEN McCLELLAN'S RETREAT: POPE SUCCEEDS TO HIM	68
CHAPTER ELEVEN SECOND BATTLE OF MANASSAS; SECOND LIBERATION OF VIRGINIA IN MARYLAND	74
CHAPTER TWELVE ANTIETAM	81
CHAPTER THIRTEEN FREDERICKSBURG; WINTER AT CAMP	87
CHAPTER FOURTEEN THE MUD MARCH - CHANCELLORSVILLE	97
CHAPTER FIFTEEN BETWEEN TWO BATTLES	107

CHAPTER SIXTEEN GETTYSBURG	114
CHAPTER SEVENTEEN THE RETREAT	120
CHAPTER EIGHTEEN COLD AND HUNGER	127
CHAPTER NINETEEN GRANT MARCHES ON RICHMOND - THE WILDERNESS SPOTSYLVANIA	134
CHAPTER TWENTY GRANT FAILS AT COLD HARBOR - THE CRATER	140
CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE LEE'S MISERABLES - THE WOMEN'S ROLE	145
CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO RICHMOND IS ABANDONED	151
CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE THE LAST FIGHTS	157
CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR THE CAPITULATION AND ITS IMMEDIATE FUTURE	164
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE THE VANQUISHED	169
CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX CIVIL LIFE - WASHINGTON COLLEGE	175
CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN LAST DAYS	183



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	<u>PAGE NO.</u>
GENERAL LEE	VERSO COVER
LEE ON TRAVELLER	FACING PG. 1
VIEW OF ST. AUGUSTINE	5
PRESIDENT LINCOLN	42
BULL RUN BATTLEFIELD	53
BOUNTY CASH FOR VOLUNTEERS	58
FAIR OAKS	60
A VICTORY OVER SWAMP AND FLOOD	63
STONEWALL JACKSON	64
KING'S SON IN CAMP	65
THE TANGLED RETREAT	66
LEE'S MEN	77
THE PASSING TRAIN	80
THE BATTLE FOG AT ANTIEDAM	80
THE PRESIDENT INVESTIGATES	86
A BLOCKADE RUNNER	106
RUIN OF CHARLESTON	106
SUMTER A FEDERAL TARGET	106
WHERE A SHELL DROPPED	113
GENERAL GRANT	133
TELEGRAPH WAGON	134
ESTABLISHING TELEGRAPH LINE	135
NANCY HART	149
LEE AND SON	150
ROBERT E. LEE - CIVIL LIFE	174





